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Toward Equity and Excellence:

An Hispanic Superintendent's Leadership Efforts in Texas

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Toward Equity and Excellence:

An Hispanic Superintendent's Leadership Efforts in Texas

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Dedication

To my mother, Soledad Ramirez, a thoughtful and intelligent woman who has always stood by me through thick and thin: without your continuous support, encouragement and personal sacrifice, I would not have achieved my goal.

To my son, Christopher Rene Garganta: You are the apple of my eye. I love you and look forward to the day when you will have your own children and be able to experience the total joy of looking into their faces as I experience it when I look into yours. Thank you for being you.

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Toward Equity and Excellence:

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Today, school districts in Texas face many challenges. Dwindling state funding, increasing diversity, and increasing accountability for meeting high state standards are but a few. These challenges are being met by some districts that are successful even in light of these daunting circumstances. Although studies have described how some of these districts achieved high performance for all students, few have investigated this phenomenon in a diverse district that is led by a Hispanic superintendent. Thus, the goal of this study was to describe the processes that occurred in a diverse Texas public school district that had achieved success with all student groups. Specifically, the study sought to describe the role the superintendent played in the improvement of the district as well as describing the effect his ethnicity played in the change process.

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Chapter 1

Background and Problem Statement

Introduction

The goal of this study was to describe the process through which a Texas public school district achieved academic success for all subgroups of its students. The focus of the study was on the transformational role of the superintendent and the interplay of the superintendent's ethnicity with reform efforts in a district that has a substantial White constituency. Although there have been recent studies describing the transformation of a school district from a district in which only one population of students succeeds to one in which the majority of all students succeeds, there have been few conducted in districts with Hispanic superintendents. A Hispanic superintendent headed some of the districts studied; however, in 100% of these districts, the community was almost exclusively Hispanic in ethnicity. None of the districts that have been studied recently in Texas represents the case of a Hispanic superintendent in a district that is ethically diverse. This gap in the research needs to be filled in order for Hispanics aspiring to the superintendency in districts not highly populated (90% or more) by Hispanics to better understand ways to lead successfully the transformation of diverse districts.

Context of the Problem

Since the Coleman Report (Coleman et al. 1966), there has been an escalating attack on the public school system. The furor was further enhanced by the publication of *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). These reports spurred a tremendous amount of research into the effectiveness of the public school system. Many of these reports (e.g., Fels, 1996; Hanushek, 1994) described the current school system as ineffective Recently the Third International Math Science Study (Stigler & Hiebert, 1999) compared the performance of youth in the United States to that of other comparable nations. Sadly, American youth did not fare well.

Although not all of the accusations in the attacks on public schools have been warranted, enough of them have been sufficiently authentic to demonstrate the need for improvement in schools. If there is a need for change in today's schools, who should lead the charge? According to Texas Education Code, the superintendent of schools, as chief executive officer of a school district, is responsible for the adequacy of the education of each child. Not only does the superintendent have ultimate responsibility, the superintendent also has the ultimate, and sometimes only, authority to make certain changes that will lead to improvements in the functioning of public schools.

Superintendents may become informed of their district campuses' and students' progress by using student performance data collected by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Each year, TEA reports the student and school performance on the Academic Excellence Indicatory System (AEIS). The AEIS measures student performance on basic academic components, attendance rate, and dropout rate. These measures are disaggregated according to ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status. Districts are categorized as Low Performing, Acceptable, Recognized, or Exemplary based upon the results of these measures. These terms are quantified in the definition of terms section of this chapter.

Whereas the number of districts rated Low Performing have been steadily declining, there are still few Recognized and Exemplary districts. For example, in 1998–1999 there were 383 Recognized districts and 122 Exemplary districts (TEA, 1999). The 1999–2000 school year had 439 Recognized districts and 168 Exemplary ones (TEA, 2000). Upon examination of these districts, the author found that very few of them had a diverse student population. That is, the districts were composed of either a largely White student population or a largely minority student population.

Of late, researchers have focused on districts rated Recognized and Exemplary. In 1997–1998 a joint effort between the Charles A. Dana Center; the Support for Texas Academic Renewal (STAR) Center; and the Cooperative Superintendency Program, Department of Educational

Administration, University of Texas at Austin, resulted in a study titled *Urgency, Responsibility, and Efficacy* (Ragland, Asera, & Johnson, 1997). Two years later, the study *Equity-Driven Achievement Focused School Districts* was completed (Skrla, Scheurich, & Johnson, 1999). Both these studies of effective school districts were completed in Texas. The studies sought to describe district-level reform efforts that targeted district-wide equitable academic success. The researchers in these studies concentrated on high-performing districts that were also high poverty and highly populated by children of color. Thus, a limitation of both of these studies was that they did not address diverse school districts with leaders of color. Also, the sample of the studies did not include many Hispanic superintendents. For example, in *Equity-Driven Achievement Focused School Districts*, 4 superintendents were interviewed. Of the 4, only one of them was Hispanic and that person served a district that was almost exclusively populated by Hispanics.

Though the studies (Ragland et al., 1997; Skrla et al., 1999) had limitations in the area of diversity, they concluded that the superintendent was an integral factor in district improvement. “It was the particular way the district leadership, especially the superintendent, responded to these catalytic events that was critical to the positive transformation in these districts” (Skrla et al., p. 14).

The importance of the superintendent was also studied by Susan Moore Johnson (1995). She found, in her study of 12 newly hired

superintendents, that in each of the districts, the superintendent was expected to provide leadership beyond the management of resources. These superintendents were to provide educational, political, and managerial leadership. Peterson, Murphy, and Halinger (1987) also maintained that the leadership role of the superintendent is crucial for district improvement. In their study, they described the management of the technical core by superintendents. Their study showed that when the superintendent chooses to focus on instruction, improvements in educational outcomes for students occur. These studies have pointed to the importance of the superintendent as a leader of educational systems. In apparent agreement with these studies, the American Association of School Administrators stated, “AASA believes there is a vital relationship between effective school district leadership and successful schools and learners” (cited in Carter & Cunningham, 1997, p. 23).

If the superintendent’s role is vital, the field must avail itself of the best leaders in education. In order to do this, all potential leaders, regardless of age, ethnicity, and gender, should be developed and promoted through the leadership ranks; no group of potential leaders should go “unharvested.” In Texas, there are very few Hispanic superintendents. The number of Hispanic superintendents is 62, which is approximately 6% of the 1,047 superintendents in the state (Texas Association of School Administrators, 2001). Even more fascinating is that of the 1,042 school districts in Texas, only 2 five-A districts have a diverse student population and are led by a

Hispanic superintendent. This fact is important because research has shown that students of color achieve more when they have positive teacher role models that are of the same ethnicity as them (Howard, 1989; Sullivan, 1989). Another reason to be concerned about the discrepancy between the number of Hispanic leaders and the number of Hispanic students is that one measure of social equity is the degree to which the professional labor force reflects the demographics of the region (Mingle, 1987).

The researcher believes that to affect the kind of change that will result in an improvement of social equity, there must be improvements in the way students of color are educated. If stakeholders and researchers are indeed interested in improving the life chances of all students, and if the leadership role of the superintendent has an impact on equity, then more research is needed into the superintendent's role as a leader of district-wide improvement of equity and excellence. To date, most studies conducted have studied White superintendents. This is problematic because Hispanic superintendents may have different issues with which to contend than their White counterparts. Also, Hispanic superintendents may be motivated to promote change for different reasons than White superintendents.

Leadership

Leadership is an often discussed but difficult to define concept. A brief glance at any text on organizational leadership, whether it is in the world of

business, social sciences, or education, could provide the reader ample evidence of this. For example, *Leadership in Organizations* (Yukl, 1998) gave eight different definitions of leadership. It is interesting that such an important concept has such an ambiguous meaning.

Throughout this paper, leadership will most often be discussed in terms that were initially described by Burns in 1978. Burns described leadership behaviors that he labeled transformational and transactional. He portrayed transformational leadership as leadership that engages followers in such a way that both leaders and followers are raised to a higher level of motivation and morality. The goals of the leader and follower, which may have been different at an earlier time, become fused. In contrast, Burns described transactional leadership as leadership in which the leader and the follower understand that each person has a purpose that may be related. In order for each to meet the purpose, a bargaining process occurs in which the leader provides the follower with what the follower desires, and the follower does the same for the leader. There is, however, no enduring fusion of purpose.

Unlike the transactional process described above, the transformational process involves a leader creating a culture in which the followers' attitudes, beliefs, and values are changed, resulting in the followers' changing their focus from themselves to an issue outside of themselves. Literature regarding this form of leadership was initiated by researchers and authors in fields other than education (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978). However, recently much has been

written in the field of education that discusses the need for transformational leadership in order to motivate all members of the school system to feel a moral imperative to change the public school system (Fullan, 1992; Sergiovanni, 1990). According to these researchers, district-wide improvement for equity and excellence must involve transformational leadership. Transformational leadership has the most potential for creating high-performing districts in which all children, including those of color, can and do succeed.

Statement of the Problem

Limited research exists regarding the leadership efforts of superintendents in districts that are high performing and diverse. Even less literature is available that discusses the leadership role of a Hispanic superintendent in a district with a diverse student body. Considering the rapid changes in the demographics in Texas, the likelihood that districts will become more diverse is very high. This increase in the population of students of color, and the corresponding change in the constitution of the once predominately White school districts, may result in an increasing number of Hispanic superintendents serving in districts that are diverse rather than the type of district they usually serve in today—that is, high-minority, high-poverty districts.

In response to the increase in the opportunity for Hispanic superintendents to lead districts that have substantial numbers of both White students and students of color, this study addressed the need for data on successful Hispanic superintendent leaders who serve in diverse districts. Specifically, this study describes the process by which a Texas public school district was able to achieve academic success for all subgroups of its students. The focus of the study was on the transformational role of the superintendent and the interplay of the superintendent being Hispanic with reform efforts in a district that has a substantial White constituency. Thus, the concerns of the research are twofold. First, how did this male, Hispanic superintendent transform a school district with a diverse student population from a district with an Acceptable rating to one with a rating of Recognized? Second, was the fact that the superintendent's ethnicity and that of the district were not congruent have any effect on the transformation process? These concerns are more thoroughly identified in the following section.

Research Questions

1. What was the leadership role of the Hispanic superintendent, if any, in transforming the district from Acceptable status to Recognized status?

2. What barriers existed that made the Hispanic superintendent's leadership efforts difficult? Which of these barriers were related to the Hispanic superintendent's race?

3. What factors existed that enhanced the Hispanic superintendent's leadership efforts. How were these factors related to the superintendent being Hispanic?

Design of the Study

Case studies allow for grounded theory to develop and for generalization to similar cases (Smulyan, 2000). This case study provides a retrospective description of a Texas school district that had a diverse student population, was headed by a Hispanic superintendent, and had experienced dramatic academic improvement. Prior to the arrival of the superintendent, the TEA had rated the district academically Acceptable. At the time of the superintendent's departure the district was rated as Recognized and had improved participation of children of color in advanced programs.

The district, Hays CISD, was selected for study from the 1,042 (TEA, 2000) public school districts in Texas based upon several criteria:

1. The superintendent was Hispanic.
2. The district had a significant population of children of color as well as a significant White population; the district needed to be diverse.
3. The district experienced improvement over the course of the superintendent's tenure.
4. The district was of moderate to large size (7,500 or more students).

This study was interpretive and qualitative in its orientation. The case study methodology was applied in an effort to develop grounded theory about the superintendent's role in transformation of a school district. Interviews were conducted with the former superintendent, central office staff, principals, teachers, parents, community leaders, and business leaders. Documents such as board minutes, newspapers, memoranda, AEIS results, and others were used as additional data.

Data were collected during the first semester of the 2001–2002 school year. All the data were historical because the superintendent who was the focal point of the study, Dr. Hinojosa, chose, as of the summer of 2001, to move on to a position in another district. The data were analyzed in an ongoing manner (Coffee & Atkinson, 1996) in order to inform further inquiry. Once the data were collected, transcribed, and analyzed, member checks were conducted to increase trustworthiness.

Significance of the Study

Two concerns are at the forefront of discussions about the educational system. The first is concern over the excellence of graduates. Increasingly, the success of the school system is judged by the ability of students to be able to compete in a global market. It is vital for U.S. students to be able to compete against students from other countries. Alarmingly, the United States is falling behind similar nations in education (Stigler & Hiebert, 1999).

In addition to excellence, equity is an issue that schools must address. Regarding equity, one concern is that children of color do not fare well under the current system of schooling. Today, the United States is becoming more diverse, and relatively soon, people of color will be the majority. These changes in demographics, coupled with the school systems' historic failure to educate children of color adequately, are of concern. Citizens look to the schools for answers. It seems obvious that schools and school districts cannot keep doing the same things. Change is necessary. If schools are the places where this change must begin, then they must have leaders who can be successful in facilitating the transformation. The leadership must come from the top, which is the superintendent.

In order for superintendents to be more successful in leading district-wide transformation, they should avail themselves of literature regarding leadership efforts of superintendents. Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2001) cited the importance of understanding what effective educational leaders do, how they do it, and why they do it. This study further illuminates the picture of what an effective Hispanic superintendent does to lead educational transformation. It also provides a look into what factor the race of the leader, particularly a Hispanic leader, plays in implementing change. Thus, it will be of utility to anyone seeking to understand the nuances of being a Hispanic leader of a school district that does not reflect the leader's ethnicity. Finally, the study will extend the existing knowledge on effective

Texas school districts to include those in which there is diversity both within the student body and within the leadership ranks.

Definition of Terms

Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) is the primary state level vehicle for reporting campus and district performance in Texas for the purposes of accountability and recognition.

Acceptable is a rating on the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS). A district is rated acceptable when 50% to 79% of all students and all subgroups master the objectives on the TAAS test, and the district has less than 4% dropout rate and greater than 90% attendance rate.

Equity is the goal of providing every child with an equal educational opportunity. The goal of social equity is a matter of redressing inequity (Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt, 1989). It can be described as “leveling the playing field.”

Hispanic is a term generally used in the United States. It refers to an ethnic group that has links to the Spanish culture and language. The term includes the diversity of other cultures such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central American, and South American (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1990).

Leadership has many definitions. A very general definition that will be used in this paper is “the process of influencing the activities of an organized group toward goal achievement” (Rauch & Behling, 1984, p. 46).

Recognized is a rating on the AEIS. A district is rated Recognized when 80% to 89% of all students and all subgroups master the objectives on the TAAS test and the district has less than 1% dropout rate and greater than 95% attendance rate.

Stakeholder is a member of the community, a student, a faculty member, a member of the business community, or an administrator.

Superintendent is the educational leader and the chief executive officer of the school district.

Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) is a criterion-referenced, state-mandated test for reading, writing, and mathematics for Grades 3–8 and Grade 10.

Transactional leadership is a method of leading in which the leader entices the compliance of followers by providing incentives and rewards that the followers value. Followers are compliant as a result of the perception that they are acting in their own best interest (Burns, 1978).

Transformational leadership is a theory of leadership in which the follower is motivated by the desire to work for a goal beyond oneself. The leader engenders trust, admiration, loyalty, and respect toward the leader (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978; Yukl, 1998).

Limitations

This study had several limitations. The first limitation of this study was the qualitative methodology used to research the case. Findings from qualitative research are limited in their ability to be replicated in different settings.

A second limitation was the limited generalizability of this study. Qualitative research, in general, is not concerned with supporting or proving hypotheses. Instead, research of this kind is concerned with the generation of hypotheses and theory based upon the thorough descriptions of the case. These descriptions may be used to understand very similar situations; that is, they may be generalizable. Some researchers (for example, Merriam, 1988; Smulyan, 2000; Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994) have described the generalizability of results from case studies as a possibility because they produce grounded theory and influence the ongoing conversation regarding the understanding of the environment.

A third limitation of this study involved the researcher's decision to study a single case. Case study involves the purposive selection of a case that is of particular interest. The case may be intrinsically interesting; the researcher is studying only because the researcher is interested in understanding this very special case. Stake (1995) has described this as intrinsic case study. He differentiated it from instrumental case study, in which

the researcher is interested in a particular question and feels that he will gain understanding by studying this case. In either event, the selection of the case is purposive. For this study, the case was chosen as a means of understanding the transformational role a Hispanic superintendent plays in a diverse public school system. As it is only one case that was selected purposively, generalizations to similar cases are not warranted.

A fourth limitation of this type of study was the potential for researcher bias. The author believes, as many qualitative researchers do, that the meanings people associate with phenomena are subjective and socially constructed; it is impossible to be totally objective. Although researchers who seek to interpret social phenomena readily discuss the nature of reality as socially and historically constructed, they must, to some degree, communicate their biases to their readers. Consequently, a priori assumptions of the researcher are listed in the following section.

Limitations more related to this particular study than to qualitative research or interpretivism were related to the retrospective nature of the study. That is, the study was conducted several months after the superintendent left the district, and therefore the subjects' recollections of the past may have diminished. Also, the retrospective nature did not allow for the use of participant observation.

Assumptions

Qualitative research methods include interviewing, observing, and analyzing verbal data. These methods can be used by a researcher whose ontology is interpretivist in nature. The meshing of an interpretivist epistemology with qualitative methods results in the potential for thick descriptions of the meaning that participants attach to certain social phenomena. One of the primary assumptions of interpretivism is that reality is socially and historically constructed. That is, as social phenomena are concerned, there is no absolute truth because each person perceives reality slightly differently. Because there are different perceptions of reality based upon one's own history, it follows that it is necessary that a researcher have some biases in her/his interpretation of events. Therefore, the researcher has chosen to diminish the primacy of objectivity, replacing it with a necessary subjectivity.

Though qualitative/interpretivist research allows for subjectivity, it is important for the researcher to be up front with any biases or. In regards to this study, the researcher believes that race and ethnicity play a significant role in the way he understands and interacts with the world around him. Therefore, it is important for readers to understand that the researcher is a Hispanic male who aspires to the superintendency. As a result of the researcher's ethnicity, he has biases that must be made explicit. First, and foremost, the author attests that superintendents of any color can be equally

effective leaders. Secondly, he believes that something deters Hispanics from seeking and obtaining superintendency in diverse school districts. This belief is held because, through research, the author found that most superintendents of color are in “majority-minority” school districts. Thirdly, the researcher believes that children of color face discrimination in schools that results in unequal chances to succeed. This discrimination is usually institutional, insidious, and unconscious. In order for these children to have an equal chance for success, the underlying attitudes, beliefs, and values of the school system must be egalitarian. It is the belief of the researcher that the leader is responsible for creating a culture that demands equity and excellence. The leader can do so by various means. The assumption is that the superintendent can use both transactional and transformational leadership styles to accomplish district goals. The more transformational the leadership, in the view of the researcher, the more effective the leader will be in making distinct changes in attitudes and beliefs regarding the abilities of children of color. Methods for controlling these biases will be discussed in chapter 3.

Conclusion

Chapter 1 has introduced the need for a better understanding of the interplay of race and leadership efforts in the superintendency of diverse public school districts in Texas. Furthermore, the author provided a brief

description of the problem, the method of study, assumptions, and limitations. The context in which superintendents work was illustrated as well as a statement of the problem. The reader was provided with an overview of the research questions that will guide the study. Through this description of the context, the problem, and the design of the study, the reader has been given insight into why the topic of study is of importance and how the study was designed to increase understanding of the phenomena.

Chapter 2 contains a review of literature and research related to leadership (specifically, transformational and transactional leadership), the superintendent's role in district-wide improvement, leadership by people of color, and the Hispanic superintendency. Additionally, limitations of the research and literature are discussed. Chapter 3 provides a detailed explanation for the methodology, a rational for choosing the particular methodology, a description of the data collection techniques, and an overview of the description. Limitations of the methodology and trustworthiness are also covered. The results of the case study are presented in chapter 4. The findings are represented in chapter 5 along with implications for theory, practice, and further research.

Chapter 2

Review of Related Literature

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature related to how a superintendent can and does function as a leader of a school district. To do so, an overview of leadership theories from the 1900s to the present is provided. Next, existing knowledge regarding transactional and transformational leadership is described. Then, the research on the role of the superintendent in effective school districts is reviewed. Following this general discussion of leadership and the more narrow discussion of superintendent leadership in effective school districts, the review delves into the topic of leadership by people of color. Differences and likenesses between leadership by people of color and Whites are identified and discussed. Finally, Hispanic superintendent leadership is discussed.

Leadership

Numerous scholars have studied leaders and leadership without coming to a consensus on a definition for either, especially the latter (Bass, 1981; Rost, 1991; Stodgill, 1974; Yukl, 1998). Leadership has many definitions, and there are many approaches to the study of leadership. Stodgill, Bass (1981), and Rost conducted extensive reviews of the literature

on leadership in an effort to describe the origin and evolution of the term leadership. Each came to similar conclusions after researching thousands of texts. Their findings can best be summarized by Stodgill's (p. 259) statement, "There are almost as many definitions of leaderships as people who have tried to define it."

The enormous number of definitions of leadership is not solely the result of bickering among scholars; the variety is the result of deep philosophical disagreements about the nature of leadership. Some scholars have viewed leadership from a power and control perspective. A representative definition from this perspective is "the ability to impress the will of the leader on those led and induce obedience, respect, loyalty, and cooperation" (Moore, 1927, p. 124, as cited in Rost, 1991). Other scholars have considered leadership as the result of traits. A definition that exemplifies this stance is "leadership is personality in action under group conditions" (Bogardus, 1934, p. 3). In the 1950s, it became fashionable to discuss leadership in terms of group processed. For example, Halpin and Winter (1957) defined leadership as "the behavior of an individual when he is directing the activities of a group toward shared goals." Definitions influenced by behaviorism include "the initiation and maintenance of structure in expectation and interaction" (Stodgill, 1974, p. 411). These examples briefly illustrate the numerous definitions of leadership. Because the author views leadership as a process that involves both followers and leaders, he ascribes

to approaches and definitions that do the same. For the purpose of this paper, Rauch and Behling's (1984) definition of leadership will be used. They wrote, "Leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an organized group toward goal achievement" (p. 46).

Similar to the variety of definitions of leadership, there are numerous approaches to studying and describing leadership. In general, most texts have described the history of leadership study in a similar fashion (Rost, 1991). The development of leadership theory has proceeded through great-man, trait, behaviorist, situational, and transformational theories. Each of these approaches is discussed below.

The first approach used to describe and study leadership was the great-man approach (Bass, 1981; Rost, 1991; Stodgill, 1974). Scholars using this approach were common at the beginning of the 20th century. At this time, the belief was that only great men could be leaders. These great men were born leaders imbued with special characteristics that assured their followers would do as they commanded (Rost). Leaders thus were born, not made; that is, there was a genetic component to leadership (Bass, 1981). Around the 1930s, this theory began to give way to the trait approach, which sought to identify the traits of leaders.

The trait approach to leadership research seeks to discover what personal attributes successful leaders possess. Underlying this perspective is the idea that some people are born leaders with natural attributes of

leadership that others do not possess (Bass, 1981; Northouse, 1997; Stodgill, 1974; Yukl, 1998). Researchers have studied these “natural-born leaders” using questionnaires to look for statistically significant correlations between individual traits and leader success. The emphasis of this approach is on the leader; the followers and the situation are not considered. One problem with this methodology is that traits are usually studied in isolation; there has not been any success in discussing the interrelatedness of the traits. In addition, trait theorists do not discuss the actions of leaders or the effect of their actions within specific contexts (Northouse). For example, people may possess traits that help them emerge as a leader, but not ones that help them remain a leader. Or, a person may demonstrate traits that enable leadership in certain contexts but negatively affect leadership in other contexts. A third criticism of this approach is the disagreement between researchers between which traits are important (Northouse). Stodgill took these shortcomings into account when he described the development of leadership as a pattern of characteristics that the leader possesses and their relevance to the characteristics and goals of the followers, rather that leadership resulting from the possession of some combination of traits. Stodgill’s assertion, based upon an extensive review of the literature and numerous studies, coupled with the behaviorist movement in psychology, signaled a change in approaches to leadership study (Rost).

The behavioral approach began to replace trait theory in the 1950s (Yukl, 1998). According to Rost (1991), “behaviorist scholars in various disciplines decided in the 1960s to concentrate on leadership as a behavior act, and so they studied what specific behaviors in what combinations produced effective leadership” (p. 18). The research into effective leadership took three forms. The first “examined how managers spend their time and described the content of managerial activities in terms of content categories such as managerial roles, functions, and responsibilities” (Yukl, p. 9). The second approach to leadership research during this period compared the behaviors of effective and ineffective leaders (Yukl). Finally, researchers at Ohio State University and at the University of Michigan studied leadership style; that is, what leaders do and how they act (Northouse, 1997).

Although different strands of research occurred during the 1950s and 1960s, one major feature was a shift in emphasis from traits of effective leaders to behaviors of effective leaders. This shift resulted in a conception of leadership as a way of behaving or as a style. Theories of leadership style are best exemplified by Blake and Mouton’s managerial/leadership grid. This model of leadership behavior first appeared in the 1960s. It describes leadership behavior in terms of concern for production and concern for people. The details, strengths, and weaknesses of the model are not of major concern for this paper. What is of concern is that for the first time, researchers began considering leadership in terms of different orientations and behaviors

that are task oriented and people oriented. This evolution in the understanding of leadership would continue into the next decade with the advent of situational theories of leadership.

In response to criticisms of the behavioral approach to describing leadership, situational theories emerged in the 1970s. These theories focused on leadership in specific situations (Northouse, 1997). Situational theorists maintained that effective leaders varied their approach to leadership in response to environmental factors. These factors include the maturity of followers in regards to the task they are being asked to perform as well as the context in which the leader must act.

One of the most well-known situational theories is Hersey-Blanchard's situational leadership theory. This theory demands that the leader match his style to the maturity (competence) and commitment of the subordinates. Leader actions are described as high directive and high supportive, high directive and low supportive, low directive and high supportive, or low directive and low supportive (Yukl, 1998). A leader must diagnose the situation and the developmental level of the employee, and then the leader must determine which style to use. Because employee competence varies according to the task and the employee, leaders must be flexible. This requirement for flexibility contrasts with the trait and contingency approaches, which argue a fixed style for leaders (Northouse, 1997). The idea of flexibility and adaptation to the needs of individual situations is a strength of this theory.

However, critics of the theory point to the lack of research that validates situational leadership theory. This lack of validity is one reason the search for alternate theories of leadership has continued (Northouse). This search has led to the formulation of transformational leadership theory.

Transformational leadership theory is primarily based on the work of Burns (1978), Bass (1985), Bennis and Nanus (1997), and Tichy and Devana (1986). It is a process that changes and transforms individuals. "Transformational leadership involves assessing followers' motives, satisfying their needs, and treating them as full human beings" (Northouse, 1997, p. 130). Transformational leaders are people who take on the challenge of revitalizing an organization. They transform organizations by defining the need to change, developing a vision, and mobilizing commitment to that vision (Tichy & Devana).

Since the publication of the second edition of Stodgill's (1981) *Handbook of Leadership*, interest and research in transformational leadership has boomed (Bass & Avolio, 1993). Yukl (1998) told of management researchers increasing concern regarding how leaders influence followers to be committed to goals beyond oneself and to make self-sacrifices in the interest of these organizations. This concern is evident in education, where the public outcry for change resulted in reports such as *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), the *Coleman Report* (Coleman et al., 1966), the excellence movement, and the

accountability movement. These movements have chronicled the need for systemic change in schools. Educational researchers also have pointed to the necessity of transformational leadership in today's educational setting (Leithwood, 1992; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1990. Transformational leadership results in second-order changes, which Leithwood (1994) described as changes in culture that, if present, enhance the probability that changes will be institutionalized. Institutionalization of appropriate change is needed to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Leithwood (1994) concluded, "Transformational approaches to school leadership are especially appropriate to the challenges facing schools now and through the remainder of the decade" (p. 499).

Transformational Leadership

Current transformational leadership theory suggests that a leader exhibits both transformational and transactional qualities. In this section, transactional factors within the model will be discussed first, followed by a description of the transformational factors.

Transactional leadership involves the leader understanding the needs of the followers, entering into an agreement with followers to provide rewards for their services, and following through with rewards (or sanctions) when the leader's goals are met (or not met). Theorists and researchers have

disagreed regarding whether or not transactional leadership is a part of the transformational leadership model. Interestingly, early writers on transformational leadership discussed these two forms of leadership as not mutually exclusive in a leader. Bass (1985) and Burns (1978) discussed leaders as possessing both transformational and transactional styles. Burns portrayed transactional leadership as part of a binary with transformational leadership, with transformational having more positive effects. Bass described transactional leadership as factors within his transformational model. According to Bass, a leader exhibits both transactional and transformational behaviors. However, only the transformational actions result in performance beyond expectations (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1993). A brief description of transactional leadership factors, as described by Bass, follows.

Contingency-reward is reinforcement of desired behaviors. The leader and subordinate agree on what is to be accomplished, by when it is to be accomplished, what the follower will be rewarded, and what the punishment (negative consequence) is for failure. The premise is that each goal-performance-reward cycle will lead toward the development of the subordinate and her/his ability to take on greater responsibility (Bass, 1985).

In order to be effective in improving subordinate development, the goal-performance-reward cycle must occur frequently and the leader must not only reward the subordinate with the agreed upon incentive, but also provide sincere encouragement and praise. Leadership of this type strives to set a

direction for the employee and to celebrate success when the destination is reached.

In contrast to this approach, management-by-exception is a form of transactional leadership in which the leadership is particularly cognizant of negative deviations from expected performance (Bass, 1985). Leaders who follow a management-by-exception model emphasize control. They tend to sit back and watch. If the process is going as planned, they do nothing to change; however, if the leader's expectations begin to go unmet, the leader must intervene. Leaders intervene by providing negative feedback or punishment when employee performance falls below a certain level. This negative feedback may take many forms. It may be a reprimand, censure, blame, penalty, fine, or loss of a job (Bass, 1985).

Studies of the effectiveness of management-by-exception have been less than supportive. The negative reinforcement was found to be counterproductive to subordinate motivation and performance (Bass, 1985). Leithwood (1994) found similar results in the educational setting. In fact, after several studies he concluded, "None of our studies, including Sillins's (1992) study, have found positive effects of management-by-exception." Further, "efforts to conceptualize or measure management-by-exception as a separate leadership dimension have been discontinued" (Leithwood, 1994, p. 508).

After conducting a thorough review of the literature, it is clear that theorists have varied in the degree to which they include transactional

leadership factors in the transformational leadership theory. Burns (1978) saw them as a binary, Bass (1985) thought of them as parts of a whole, and Leithwood (1994) integrated contingency-reward into his theory but excluded management-by-exception.

There is much less disagreement regarding the transformational factors than the transactional ones. The next section elaborates on the transformational leadership factors in order to provide the reader with a general overview.

Transformational leadership is one way of understanding the efforts of leaders to accomplish their goals for the organization (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978; Chirichello, 1999). These goals become realized when the leader and followers interact in ways that result in a shared vision and a mutual commitment to attain the goals of the organization. Commitment to shared goals and visions is the result of the transformational factors within the transformational leadership paradigm. These factors are charisma, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation.

One of the effects of vision, charisma, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation is a fusion of the followers' and the leaders' goals. This fusion results in all members of the organization being motivated to perform above and beyond the call of duty. They feel a moral imperative to reach the outcomes that they jointly desire.

Development in followers of this moral imperative to perform beyond the expectations of their leader was first described by Burns (1978). He used the term *transformational leader* to describe a leader who engaged with his followers in a way that resulted in the leader and the followers raising one another to higher levels of morality and motivation (p. 382). Burns similarly portrayed transformational leadership as "leadership that ultimately becomes moral in that it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both leader and led, and thus it has a transforming effect on both" (p. 20). According to Burns, leaders' actions are characterized as either transformational or transactional. Transformational behaviors were behaviors that involved raising followers' commitment to goals by inspiring them to believe that it was their moral responsibility to reach these goals. Burns theorized that leaders also engaged in transactional behaviors. He characterized these behaviors as those the leader and the follower agreed that the follower would display in exchange for rewards the leader would furnish.

Burns's ideas, though well received, were completely theoretical in nature. His framework was not grounded in actual research. However, this grounding soon became available as Bass (1985) conducted inquiry into the theoretical framework. Through his study, Bass furthered the understanding of transformation leadership. Although he agreed with Burns's concepts of fusion of goals and increased motivation, he disagreed that the level of

human conduct need necessarily be raised. Bass also extended Burns's concept of transformational leadership by describing three aspects of transformational leadership behavior: charisma, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation. Bass described each aspect as follows:

Charisma has a strong emotional component. It entails strong, positive feelings between the leader and the follower. The result of these strong feelings is the follower trusting in the leader and believing in her/his efficacy. This belief becomes an unqualified belief that the leader will help them achieve their mission. Charisma is, thus the bedrock of the transformational process. Developing a shared vision and promoting the belief that it can be accomplished are necessary ingredients (Bass, 1985).

Charismatic leadership is found in industrial, educational, governmental, and military leaders. When subordinates were asked to describe the charisma of these leaders they described them as "someone who made everyone enthusiastic about assignments, who inspired loyalty to the organization, who commanded respect from everyone, who had a special gift of seeing what was really important, and who had a sense of mission" (Bass, 1985, p.). Charisma is therefore important in that it elicits and initial belief in the possibility of the transformational process.

Individualized consideration is simply treating subordinates as individuals and not as a collective group. Consideration is given to each individual's special needs and talents in order to best make use of those

talents and to best meet those needs. Transformational leaders give special attention to members of an organization who seem neglected in an effort to provide support and motivation. This individualization generally has a developmental orientation that results in “the leader setting the example to be followed and assigning tasks in order to alter subordinates’ abilities and motivations as well as to further immediate organizational needs” (Bass, 1985, p. 85).

Intellectual stimulation is the transformational leader’s means of arousing and changing followers’ problem awareness, problem solving, thoughts, beliefs, and values. It is the component of transformational leadership that results in a jump in the way followers conceptualize, comprehend, and discern problems as well as solutions to those problems (Bass, 1985, p. 99).

Bass (1985) conducted research in order to determine what the relationship of transformational and transactional factors was with selected variables. The results (see Table 2.1) showed that there was a statistically significant positive correlation between the factors of charisma, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, contingent reward, and extra effort. Bass found the same results when the factors were compared to the variable of satisfaction with supervisor. Through his quantitative studies, Bass surmised the following:

1. Five factors were required to describe transactional and transformational leadership.

2. These factors were measurable.

3. Transformational leadership contributes positively to extra effort; effectiveness, and satisfaction of both the leader and the follower beyond what is to be expected from transactional leadership.

Table 2.1

Relation of Transformational and Transactional Factor Scale Scores to Selected Variables for 256 Supervisors and Managers in a Single U.S. Firm

Factor	Extra effort	Satisfaction with supervisor	Appraised performance of subordinate
Transformational			
Charisma	.88	.67	.19
Individualized consideration	.79	.68	.24
Intellectual stimulation	.80	.64	.08
Transactional			
Contingent reward	.76	.67	.05
Management-by-exception	-.24	-.27	-.04

Note. Statistically significant correlations shown in bold type where $p < .05$ when $r = .12$, and $p < .01$ when $r = .16$. From *Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations,* by B. M. Bass, 1985, New York: The Free Press.

Further study by Bass into transformational leadership resulted in an extension of his theory of transformational leadership. The current model (see

Figure 2.1 and Figure 2.2) includes seven factors (Bass & Avolio, 1993). The seven factors are charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, contingent reward, management-by-exception, and laissez-faire. The first four factors are considered transformational factors, the next two are transactional factors, and the last is characterized as a nonleadership factor.

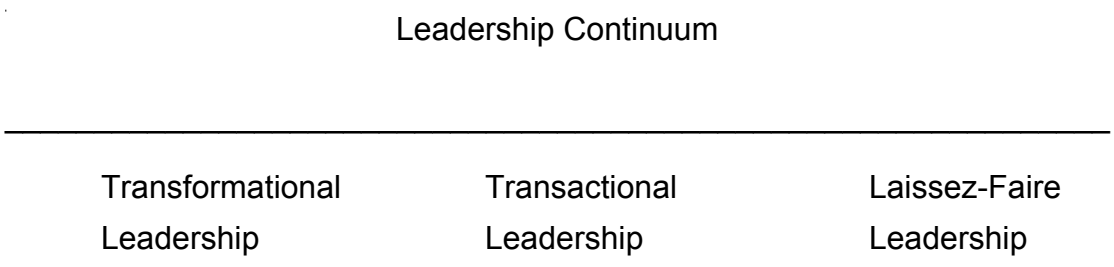

Figure 2.1. Leadership as a single continuum from transformational to laissez-faire leadership. From *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (p. 143)*,* by P. Northouse, 1997, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

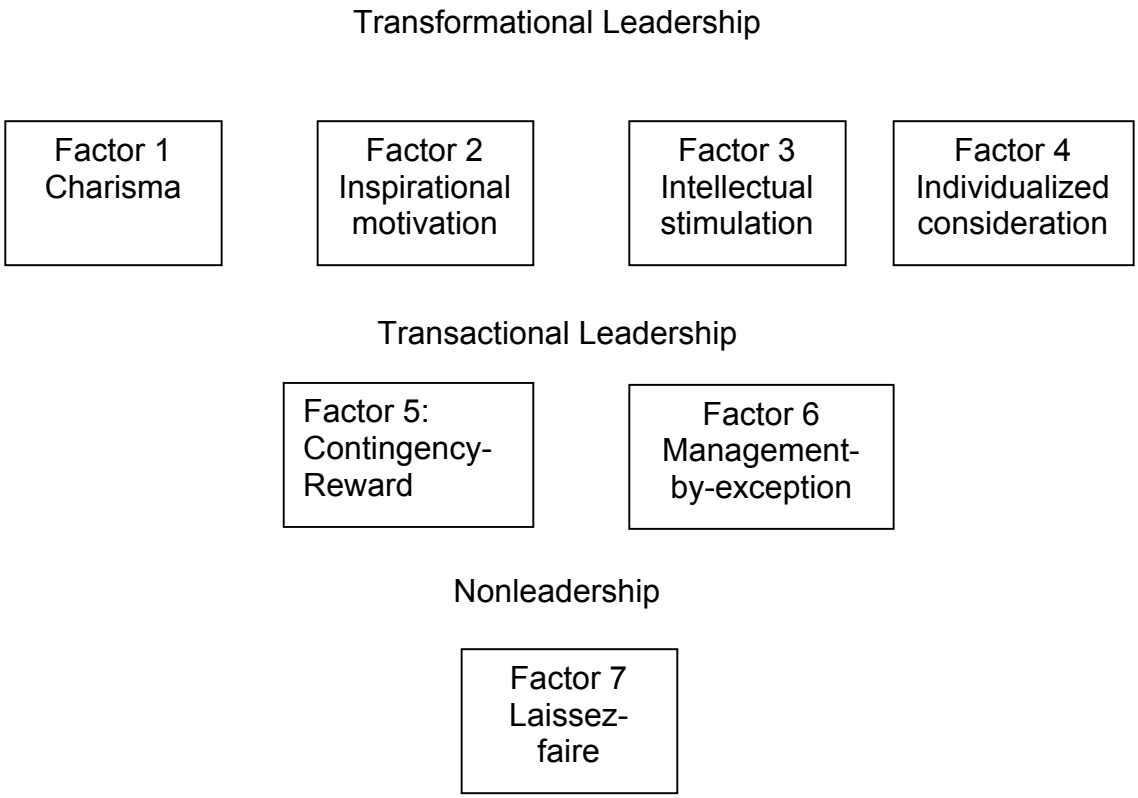

Figure 2.2. A model of transformational and transactional leadership: leadership factors from nonleadership to transformational leadership. From *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (p. 135)*,* by P. Northouse, 1997, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Bennis and Nanus (1997) also studied transformational leadership. They depicted transformational leadership as having three components: developing a vision, developing community and trust, and facilitating organizational learning. In their later work they stated, “For a successful transformation (of culture) to be achieved, three things have to happen… 1

create a new and compelling vision, 2 develop commitment to the new vision, and 3. institutionalize the new vision" (p. 130).

The theories by Bass (1985), Bass and Avolio (1993), Bennis and Nanus (1997), and Burns (1978) provided an understanding of this form of leadership within contexts other than education. Thus, though they provide excellent historical and reference material for educational researchers, a model that is developed within the context of education through extensive research is needed. Leithwood (1994) delineated such a model of transformational leadership in schools. The model was based upon the transformational/transactional model found in Bass (1985) and Avolio and Bass. Through his study, Leithwood found that transformational leadership was composed of six dimensions:

1. Identify and articulate a vision: Behavior on the part of the leader is aimed at identifying new opportunities for his or her school and developing (often collaboratively), articulating, and inspiring others with a vision of the future.

2. Foster the acceptance of group goals: Behavior on the part of the leader is aimed at promoting cooperation among staff and assisting them to work together toward common goals.

3. Convey high performance expectations: Behavior demonstrates the leader's expectations for excellence, quality, and/or high performance on the part of the staff.

4. Provide appropriate models: Behavior on the part of the leader sets an example for staff to follow and is consistent with the values espoused by the leader.

5. Provide intellectual stimulation: Behavior on the part of the leader challenges staff to reexamine some of the assumptions about their work and to rethink how it can be performed.

6. Provide individualized support: Behavior on the part of the leader indicates respect for individual members of staff and concern about their personal feelings and needs (Leithwood, 1994).

Results of the study supported a two-factor (transformational-transactional) theory of transformational leadership in education. However, upon further consideration, Leithwood (1994) asserted that the transactional dimension of contingency-reward actually helped define transformational rather than transactional. Management-by-exception, a dimension of transactional leadership, was deleted from the agenda for further study because no studies have found positive effects of this strategy of management of subordinate performance.

Other researchers have also used the transformational paradigm in education. For example, Chirichello (1999) described a study he conducted in 1997 of the leadership behavior of principals in effective schools. These principals exhibited preferred leadership styles that were related to transformational leadership. There seems to have been a correlation between

the leaders' transformational style and the effectiveness of the school and the positive perception of the school's climate by the teachers. Numerous other authors have corroborated the importance of transformational leadership in school improvement (e.g., Leithwood, Begley, & Cousins, 1990; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1990). Fullan (1992) also contended that transformational leaders affect school climate and culture in such a way that school restructuring/transformation is a possibility.

Literature regarding transformational leadership has become more and more commonplace in educational journals. The next section describes superintendent leadership in effective districts. Some of the studies included used a transformational model to discuss the leadership efforts, whereas others did not.

Superintendent Leadership in Effective Districts

Research regarding the importance of a superintendent in leading a district toward effectiveness and high performance has been scant. However, in recent years the literature has been growing. Researchers such as Petersen et al. (1987), Holdaway and Genge (1995), Johnson (1995), Ragland et al. (1997), and Skrla et al. (1999) have contributed to the growing body of knowledge. Their studies will be covered below in a chronological order.

Peterson et al. (1987) studied the relationship of the superintendents' management of the technical core with the effectiveness of the school district. They were particularly interested in the degree of organizational coupling and its relationship to improved student performance. They found that through the management of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, superintendents were able to coordinate and to control their districts. The authors also surmised that the increased effectiveness was not only the result of the increased coordination and control over the technical core of the school district—the curriculum, assessment and instruction—but also the result of changes in the organizational culture.

Holdaway and Genge (1995) studied the perceptions of effective CEOs (the Canadian term equivalent of the U.S. superintendent) concerning their leadership role and the actions they take to increase the effectiveness of their school districts. The 12 participants responded to interviews that ranged in length from 75 to 135 minutes. Their responses were categorized and analyzed. The results were that these effective superintendents prioritized personnel over system issues and system issues over instructional issues. The superintendents were also asked to discuss their leadership behaviors. All of the superintendents mentioned being action oriented and being an effective delegator as important leadership behavior. The next most common response was being an example, followed by involving stakeholders. Another important result of this study was participants judged having people skills, a

sound knowledge base, and a sense of direction as factors that most contributed to their effectiveness.

Keys to the effectiveness of 12 newly appointed superintendents were studied and described by Susan Moore Johnson (1995). She found that a superintendent's leadership could be classified by three categories: educational, political, and managerial. The actions of superintendents within these three realms were highly context specific. For example, she found that superintendents behaved in a manner that provided consistency in districts that had been under large amounts of change. Conversely, superintendents acted as change agents in districts in which the constituents believed that the status quo had been perpetuated for too long. Thus, according to Johnson, the educational, political, and managerial leadership activities of a superintendent are highly context specific.

The superintendents in Johnson's (1995) study exhibited tendencies in line with those described as transformational and transactional by Leithwood (1994). For example, regardless of the context, all superintendents formulated a vision of what the future district would look like. Although each superintendent believed that vision was essential, not all believed that their personal vision was of more importance than their local vision. They believed that local vision "must be tailored to a specific context, defining change for a particular place" (Johnson, p. 62). In addition, some superintendents believed that crafting a vision should be a collaborative effort. These superintendents'

practices are examples of the second factor in Leithwood's (1994) model; namely, they fostered the acceptance of group goals by collaboration in the crafting of the vision.

The realization of the vision required further leadership within the educational, political, and managerial arenas. Within each of these areas, the superintendents in Johnson's (1995) study exhibited behaviors described as transactional or transformational. Only when superintendents prove themselves capable educators and wise change agents do they inspire the trust from their constituents that is required for change (Johnson). The "trust factor" is one of the transformational component of Bennis and Nanus's (1997) description of transformational leadership. Prior to the formation of trust, cooperation between constituents and the superintendent is based on a transactional idea that supports the status quo (Johnson).

In Johnson's (1995) study, the managerial functions of the superintendent were also shown to be both transactional and transformational. Each superintendent had to determine to what degree decision-making would be centralized/decentralized, how bureaucratic the district would be, and whether a tightly or loosely coupled organization was needed. Within the study, the leaders of highly bureaucratic and tightly coupled systems tended to be more transactional than the leaders of more loosely coupled and decentralized systems. In addition, the districts in which the leaders were more transformational and less transactional were described

as more change oriented and creative. Conversely, districts that had leaders who were more transactional than transformational were described as maintaining the status quo. Thus, the leadership of the 12 superintendents in the study could be described in terms of the transformational leadership model. Effective superintendents exhibited both transactional and transformational behaviors. The extent to which each was exhibited in the areas of educational, political, and managerial leadership depended on the context of the superintendency, the personal characteristics of the superintendent, and the organizational structure of the district. According to Johnson, the success of a district is in part related to how effective the superintendent is in leading change.

Two studies of successful school districts were recently conducted in Texas (Ragland et al., 1997; Skrla et al., 1999). They both used qualitative measures to describe the events that resulted in Acceptable school districts undergoing a transformation that resulted in accountability ratings of Recognized and Exemplary. Although other factors also contributed to this transformation, the actions of the superintendent were seen as instrumental.

According to Ragland et al. (1997, p. 3), the district leaders in the 10 districts studied “created a sense of urgency for the improvement of academic achievement that was felt among both school personnel and the community at large.” This sense of urgency is very similar to the idea of a vision that all children can succeed. When this vision was shared with the community and

the school district staff, it became their vision also. Once everyone believed that all children could succeed and once everyone felt a moral imperative to ensure all students succeed, transformation became possible.

The next step was for the superintendents to hold the campus principals responsible for ensuring the success of all children. This was accomplished by communicating clearly the expectations that all children will succeed and by monitoring student progress via student performance data. Accountability was balanced with flexibility to initiate programs that would lead to success (Ragland et al., 1997).

The third theme of superintendent leadership within the 10 effective districts was building efficacy by aligning resources and structuring support (Ragland et al., 1997). In each of the school districts, the superintendent flattened the organization and changed the relationship between the central office and the campuses. Central office personnel became a source of support to the campuses rather than bureaucrats that worked downtown and pushed policies and procedures. The central office personnel were used to build the capacity of the staff. The staff's and the school's needs were put first.

The Skrla et al. (1999) study was a follow up to the 10-district study described above. The researchers studied 4 districts in geographically varied locations that were experiencing high levels of student achievement on a wide array of measures. These high levels of achievement were the direct result of

occurrences within the school system and within the community. The researchers categorized the factors that led to the improvement of the districts into five themes: (a) state context of accountability for achievement and equity, (b) local equity catalysts, (c) ethical response of district leadership, (d) district transformation, and (e) everyday equity. The dimensions of Leithwood's (1994) transformational model can be seen within these themes. For example, information from the state accountability system, coupled with pressure from local equity catalysts was used to create a vision that all students could succeed. The superintendents conveyed high performance expectations in that they made it clear that the academic expectations for students were not negotiable.

Another dimension of the transformational model that was exemplified in the Skrla et al. (1999) study is that the leaders provided appropriate role models to the staff. One of the superintendents in the study best illustrated this by saying, "Keep the main thing the main thing." The superintendent voiced over and over that student achievement was the main thing in his district. In each of these districts, the transformation that occurred was partly the result of the superintendents' creating a shared vision of student achievement. This shared vision was not enough, though. The superintendents had to change the culture of the district to one that was morally and ethically committed to meeting the needs of all children. To do so, the superintendents conveyed high expectations to the staff and provided the

staff individualized support and consideration in order to build their capacity so that they could meet the superintendents' expectations. Finally, the superintendents provided student performance data and instructional specialists in order to stimulate the campus principals and their staffs into finding new processes, programs, expectations, and structures so that achievement and equity goals could be met.

Taken individually, each of these studies (Holdaway & Genge, 1995; Johnson, 1995; Petersen et al., 1987; Ragland et al., 1997; Skrla et al., 1999) is informative to the field of educational administration. As an aggregate, their findings are even more powerful. Each of these studies suggested that the leader has responsibility for setting the direction (providing vision), holding staff accountable for student performance, changing organizational culture from one that accepts student failure to one that expects student success, and providing resources to ensure that the staff has the capacity to make the required changes. These items fit nicely into the model of transformational leadership. Thus, in the aggregate, the studies suggested that superintendents that are successful in creating effective districts exhibit leadership behaviors that parallel those in the transformational model.

Though these studies are informative, they do have one serious shortcoming: They do not assess the leadership of minority superintendents to a great extent. In fact, the only minority superintendents that were studied

were found in high minority districts. The next section describes studies of the leadership behaviors of people of color.

Leadership by People of Color

"Relatively little effort to date has gone into understanding how culture influences the content or processes of educational practices" (Hallinger & Leithwood, 1998). Consequently, leadership theories all have been formulated through the lens of the dominant Eurocentric culture. "Most people's values are strongly influenced by their social environment" (Hofstede, 1976). Thus, values and norms of people of color may be different from those of the dominant White male. Hofstede's cross-cultural studies of leadership (1976, 1980, 1983) have produced evidence that different cultures view leadership differently. It is likely that the differences found in cross-cultural research of leaders in the business sector can be found in the educational sector. The seminal work of Getzels, Lipham, and Campbell (1968) illustrated the varying impact that different cultural values exert on the thinking and behavior of leaders and other organizational members (Hallinger & Leithwood). Within recent years, more attention has been paid to leaders of color and to differences between them and leaders who are of the dominant culture. This attention has described traits, differences in and barriers to leadership faced by leaders of color.

Traits of Superintendents of Color

One recent attempt to describe the traits of leaders of color in educational administration was undertaken by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA). In 1992, AASA conducted a national quantitative study of the superintendency aimed at describing the characteristics of current superintendents. One finding from the study was that people of color were underrepresented as heads of school districts. Respondents of color accounted for only 3.9% of the respondents, compared to 95.5% of the respondents that indicated they were nonminority (0.6% did not respond). The study also showed that superintendents of color are decidedly more liberal, have less educated parents, and come from more urban backgrounds than their nonminority counterparts. With regards to career paths, the study found that superintendents of color are more likely to follow the career pattern of teacher, principal, central office administrator, and superintendent than White superintendents. Nonminorities are more likely to skip one of these steps and access the superintendency in a less linear fashion.

Once in the superintendency, do any traits distinguish minorities from nonminorities? The study found that people of color are more likely to serve in communities that are more populous. They tend to involve the community more in the schools and also work more with the school board in developing the agenda for board meetings (AASA, 1992).

Taken as a whole, the *Study of the American School Superintendency* (AASA, 1992) painted a portrait of the superintendent of color that looks different than that of the White superintendent. These differences may be fundamental to differences in the way that superintendents of color lead as compared to their White counterparts.

Differences between Leaders of Color and White Leadership

Most research studies that have looked at educational leadership have not considered the possible effects of the race of the leader (Lomotey, 1989). One study that examined the relationship between leadership and race/culture was conducted by Kofi Lomotey (1989). In the study, Lomotey described the significance of culture and race in relation to the leadership of 3 African American principals. The findings of the study implied that the cultural congruence of the African American principal and the African American students is an important factor in the success of African American schools.

Hugh Scott (1990) conducted anther study that examined the relationship between race and leadership. Scott endeavored to uncover the ways in which Black school superintendents perceived the linkage between their racial consciousness and their sense of professionalism as educators. Scott discovered that Black school superintendents had added difficulties that White school superintendents did not face. Black superintendents were like

their White counterparts in their desire to be accepted as competent professionals by all their constituents. However, all the respondents to the survey agreed that it was more difficult to be successful in the kinds of superintendencies to which they were appointed. These superintendencies tended to be in high-poverty and high-minority districts.

Harris (1988) commented on a similar condition in his article “A District-Wide Application of Effective Schools Research.” He stated, “When Blacks are appointed superintendents or even principals, we can generally make assumptions about the nature of the district or the school” (p. 292).

Another difficulty that Scott (1990) found Black superintendents had to endure was the greater demands placed upon them than on their White predecessors by Black community members. Flores (1981) reported a similar finding in his study of Hispanic leaders.

Barriers to leadership. In addition to differences in leadership, minorities also face different challenges while they are in leadership positions (Cose, 1993; Flores, 1981, Scott, 1990). One situation that minority leaders often find themselves in that their White counterparts do not is the dilemma of being seen as doing too much or too little to advocate for minority students. Once a minority rises to an executive level position, members of her/his ethnicity expect that he/she will make wholesale changes to the system in order to level the playing field. When these changes do not occur rapidly enough, minority constituents become quickly disillusioned with the leader

and perceive the leader as a “turncoat,” a “coconut,” or a “sellout” (Flores, p. 37; Scott). Thus, White leaders do not have to “wear two hats,” as do leaders of color.

Ellis Cose in *The Rage of a Privileged Class* (1993) provided a list of “a dozen demons.” These demons are situations and issues with which minority leaders must contend, unlike their nonminority counterparts. These demons include not fitting in, being excluded from the club, being subjected to low expectations, being presumed to be destined for failure, having to work harder and longer, and being self-censured among others.

Though Blacks and other leaders of color encounter obstacles that Whites do not, they believe they are innately more qualified to understand the special barriers to people of their own ethnicity (Harris, 1988; Lomotey, 1989, Scott, 1990). This is an important factor for educators and for school boards that are selecting superintendents because the demographics of the United States are changing in such a way that minority populations are increasing.

Hispanic Superintendent Leadership

In spite of this increase in the minority, including Hispanic, population, little has been written regarding the Hispanic superintendent leadership. Most of the studies that address Hispanics do so in the context of ethnicity and female gender (Mendez-Morse, 1997; Ortiz, 1982). In her study of 3 exemplary female, Mexican American, superintendents, Mendez-Morse found

that ethnicity and gender played a role in access to the superintendency. The superintendents in the study had to reject the norm of the superintendent as a White male before they could become successful district leaders. The female, Mexican American superintendents also had to reject the norm of the career path to the superintendency. These women ascended to the superintendency through a different route than their White male counterparts. Another aspect that Mendez-Morse found in her study was that the participants had to continually assert themselves to prove that they were capable of being leaders. These assertions had to be made in response to the norm of the leader being a White male. Thus, these Mexican-American, female superintendents had to contend with barriers and deal with issues that their White, male counterparts did not.

Others researchers have reported similar findings. For example, Campbell-Jones and Avelar-Lasalle (2000) conducted a study that examined the role of ethnicity exclusive of gender. The researchers' findings were separated into two categories: necessary conditions for success and barriers to success. With regards to the former category, all 5 of the research participants agreed that minority superintendents must master the same knowledge set as White administrators. However, Hispanic (and Black) administrators must understand and master the historical inertia within the community they serve. In general, the participants believed that their race did

matter in America. The participants felt that they needed to be more knowledgeable than White superintendents.

Besides being knowledgeable in effective district leadership, minority superintendents were expected to be able to mobilize ethnic communities in a nonthreatening way (Campbell-Jones & Avelar-Lasalle, 2000). Though all the participants felt it important to create equity and a conversation about the inequitable treatment of minority students, they suggested that minority superintendents must proceed with caution in this area. Close attention, they declared, must be paid to the use of statesmanship in pursuing equity goals.

The leaders in the study (Campbell-Jones & Avelar-Lasalle, 2000) felt other attributes were necessary for success. Among the more important were to be willing to work harder than everyone else and to command the English language better than others. In summary, these leaders felt they had to do better than the rest because there was a perception by some that they did not get the job based on their qualifications. Therefore, they had to prove themselves.

The participants in the Campbell-Jones and Avelar-Lasalle (2000) study defined several factors that they considered to be barriers to success. Each of the factors was related to racial prejudice. The first factor was “the temptation to see oneself as the victim of all of the ills of society and therefore not worthy of the position of superintendent” (Campbell-Jones & Avelar-Lasalle, p. 17). Another barrier was preconceptions about their abilities,

leadership, and effectiveness. By nature of their ethnicity, they were considered to be less able. The superintendents contended with these barriers by continuous, positive self-talk and making use of ethnic networks and mentors.

From the review of literature on minority leadership and Hispanic superintendent leadership in particular, it seems plausible that Hispanic superintendents face different and additional challenges to their position than do White superintendents. The author is left to question what can be done to assist Hispanic superintendents in dealing with the extraordinary requirements placed on them.

Theoretical Framework

Through the review of the literature the author was able to discern a distinct theoretical framework to be used in examining the case of a Hispanic superintendent's successful efforts to transform a diverse Texas public school district toward equity and excellence. Specifically, the author used Leithwood's (1994) six-factor model of transformational leadership to identify and to describe the leadership efforts of the Hispanic superintendent. Leithwood's model is comprised of the following components: (a) identify and articulate a vision, (b) foster the acceptance of group goals, (c) convey high performance expectations, (d) provide appropriate models, (e) provide intellectual stimulation, and (f) provide individualized support.

This model is appropriate for assessing the leadership efforts of the case. Transformational leadership is being privileged over other leadership models because of its ability to create first-order and second-order change. First-order changes are changes in the technical core of an organization. Some examples of first-order changes in schools are curriculum, instructional strategies, class size, and number of periods in a day (Leithwood, 1994). Second-order changes are changes in the beliefs, values, and culture of an organization. These changes are necessary if any changes of the first order are to be institutionalized. Therefore, this model will be helpful in describing the efforts of the Hispanic superintendent to promote changes (first and second order) in the educational system that result in equity and excellence.

Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the literature on leadership, transformational leadership, superintendent leadership in effective districts, minority leadership, and Hispanic superintendent leadership in an effort to provide the reader with enough background information to fully understand the theoretical framework and implications of this study. Within the chapter, Leithwood's (1994) model of transformational leadership was discussed in enough detail to be used as a theoretical framework for this study. The next chapter will provide a detailed description of the design and methodology of this study.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter provides a description of the methodology and design that was used to study the leadership efforts of a Hispanic superintendent in his attempt to change a diverse school district from one in which only some student groups succeeded into one in which all student groups were successful. In particular, the chapter includes a detailed description of the research procedures, the rationale for the choice of each particular procedure, and the timeframe of study completion. This chapter consists of seven sections: (a) a general overview of the chapter, (b) the purpose of the study, (c) research design, (d) criteria for site and participant selection, (e) instrumentation and data collection procedures, (f) data analysis procedures, and (g) summary.

Overview

The methodology for this study was qualitative in nature. Qualitative researchers often have interpretivist or constructivist epistemological orientations. This researcher conducted the study and analyzed the data using a constructivist epistemology. Constructivists maintain that there are multiple social realities rather than one external reality. Furthermore, they

assert that knowledge is created mutually, and they seek interpretive understandings of their subjects' meanings (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Stake, 1995). The constructivist researcher's task is "to come to understand and interpret how the various participants in a social setting construct the world around them" (Glesne, 1999, p. 5). As themes about the case emerged, the researcher represented his interpretation of the data.

In addition to being conducted from a qualitative methodological paradigm, the study used methods of study that fall under the umbrella term *case study research*. The case was studied for its instrumental value. Robert Stake (1995) discussed instrumental case studies as having value because they assist in understanding something else. This particular case was instrumental in understanding the leadership efforts of a Hispanic superintendent in an ethnically diverse school district.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to describe the process by which a Texas public school district was able to achieve academic success for all student subgroups. The focus of the study was on the role played by the superintendent in leading this change and the interplay of the superintendent being Hispanic with reform efforts in a district with a substantial White constituency. The superintendent's leadership efforts were explored and described using Leithwood's (1994) six-factor transformational model. In

addition, the interplay between the superintendent's ethnicity and his leadership efforts was explored in an effort to determine necessary conditions for success versus barriers to success for Hispanic superintendents.

Research Questions

As described in chapter 1, the following research questions guided this study:

1. What was the leadership role of the Hispanic superintendent, if any, in transforming the district from Acceptable status to Recognized status?

2. What barriers existed that made the Hispanic superintendent's leadership efforts difficult? Which of these barriers were related to the Hispanic superintendent's race?

3. What factors existed that enhanced the Hispanic superintendent's leadership efforts? How were these factors related to the superintendent being Hispanic?

Design of the Study

This study used a single case study design to study the leadership efforts of a Hispanic superintendent that served in an ethnically and socioeconomically diverse school district. Case studies may use qualitative or quantitative methods; in this case, the researcher chose to use only qualitative methods. The qualitative methods used throughout this study

incorporated the five features of qualitative research described by Bogdan and Biklen (1982, p. 32):

1. Qualitative research has a natural setting, as the direct source of data and the researcher is the key instrument.

2. Qualitative research is descriptive.

3. Qualitative researchers are concerned with process rather than simply with outcomes or products.

4. Qualitative researchers tend to analyze their data inductively.

5. Meaning is the essential concern of the research.

Qualitative methods are very suitable to exploring, discovering, and gaining insight into the perceptions of individuals within the case to be studied. Researchers who use qualitative methods are more interested in theory generation, insight, and discovery rather than in hypothesis testing (Merriam, 1988). Yin (1994) wrote, “The distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex phenomena” (p. 14). The combination of case study and qualitative methodology should result in an illumination of the phenomena to be studied, in this case the leadership efforts of a Hispanic superintendent in an ethnically and socioeconomically diverse Texas school district.

In addition to the heuristic value of qualitative case studies, they have inductive value. Qualitative case studies rely on inductive reasoning, the result of which is “generalization, concepts, or hypotheses” (Merriam, 1988,

p.13). However, generalizing to cases that are not very similar should be done cautiously. For example, the results of a study of a Hispanic principal in San Antonio, Texas, may be generalized to a Hispanic principal in Dallas, Texas, to a greater degree than to a White principal in South Carolina. Although generalization is limited, Yin (1994) and Stake (1995) suggested that generalizability is one advantage of qualitative case study methodology.

Any methodology has strengths and limitations. The strengths of qualitative single case study design have been described. One of the limitations of the qualitative single case study design is the limited generalizability of the results (Merriam, 1988). An additional limitation of this methodology is the natural lengthiness of the process and reporting the results. That is, the amount of description, analysis, and summary of material may become extremely time intensive.

Another limitation is the sensitivity and integrity of the researcher. The qualitative researcher is the primary data-collecting instrument. Like any other instrument, the researcher must be sensitive and reliable. This sensitivity and reliability comes with experience. Even though the researcher may be an excellent listener, the data analysis may suffer from researcher bias. Thus, qualitative researchers must take special care to keep their biases from coloring what the participants actually communicated.

Despite drawbacks to the use of a qualitative single case study, this researcher chose this method because of its heuristic and inductive value.

The researcher believed that the strengths of this particular methodology outweighed its weaknesses.

Site and Participant Selection

Selection of the case to be studied used specific criteria. A list of Hispanic superintendents in Texas was developed based upon information provided by the Texas Association of School Administrators and by a respected source. From this list, Hispanic superintendents serving in districts with 7,000 or more students were selected. The sample was further narrowed using the criterion of ethnic diversity; that is, only Hispanic superintendents who served in districts with a White student population of more than 30% but less than 50% were selected. The purpose of this criterion was to select Hispanic superintendents serving in ethnically diverse school districts rather than the traditional case of Hispanic superintendents serving in districts with a Hispanic population greater than 80%.

Using the diversity criterion left the researcher with three possible cases to study. At this point, the districts were examined to determine which, if any, district had showed steady but marked improvement that had resulted in a change in TEA accountability rating from either Low Performing to Academically Acceptable or Academically Acceptable to Recognized. This criterion was one variable used to determine whether the district had become a high-performing district that was achievement focused and equity driven.

Other variables that were used to select the case from the three possibilities were 6-year longitudinal drop out rate, attendance rate, percent of students taking and passing end-of-course exams, percent of students taking the SAT, SAT scores, and percent of students enrolled in Advanced Placement classes. The values of each of the variables were disaggregated by ethnicity in an effort to discern which case showed the most improvement in the achievement of Hispanic students.

Once the possible cases were viewed through this broad array of variables, the first choice for the case study became very clear. However, the first choice for this study was not selected because of political factors that would have made gaining access to reliable data very difficult. Specifically, the superintendent at the time of the study had recently left his school district for another position and was viewed negatively by political forces in the community. In part, this was as a result of the district's fund balance becoming dangerously depleted during his tenure as superintendent. Thus, the first choice for the study was not the final case study chosen.

The two remaining districts were analyzed to determine which evidenced more success. After analyzing the AEIS data, the researcher determined that one district would meet the criteria of the study better than the other. The researcher discussed his decision with members of the research community, who agreed with the choice. The researcher focused efforts on the preliminary direct research step: gaining access to the district.

The Site—Then and Now

When Dr. Hinojosa arrived in Hays CISD in 1997, he entered a district that was troubled. Although the district was rated academically acceptable on the TEA's AEIS, TAAS results showed glaring differences between the performance of White students and the performance of ethnic minorities. In addition, the results on other indicators of academic success were alarming. At the time of Dr. Hinojosa's departure, many of these gaps had been closed. These results are displayed in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Student Academic Performance in Hays CISD

Indicator	African American		Hispanic		White	
	1996–1997	2001–2002	1996–1997	2001–2002	1996–1997	2001–2002
TAAS cumulative pass rate: Exit	100%	100%	78.7%	94.7%	89.7%	97.9%
Algebra EOC						
% taking	11.4%	18.8%	15.1%	14.5%	16.9%	16.8%
% passing	NA	32.0%	NA	34.3%	NA	54.1%
Biology EOC						
% taking	24.3%	20.0%	17.1%	19.8%	18.6%	24.4%
% passing	NA	72.2%	NA	69.7%	NA	89.7%
English II EOC						
% taking	NA	22.2%	NA	20.2%	NA	25.4%
% passing	NA	50.0%	NA	39.5%	NA	71.1%
U.S. History EOC						
% taking	NA	20.0%	NA	16.6%	NA	20.4%
% passing	NA	55.6%	NA	58.8%	NA	87.3%
AP						
% taking	0%	12.1%	7.7%	6.3%	21.9%	21.6%
% passing	None took the exam	—[a]	35.3%	40.9%	56.3%	53.0%
SAT						
% taking	80%	70.6%	45.3%	38.0%	74.7%	66.4%
Mean SAT score	952	842	914	872	1067	1023

[a] Not significant data

In addition to the changes in the academic performance of students, the district also experienced a change in its demographics. The district's population increased dramatically. In addition, the number of affluent people who were ethnic minorities increased. These changes are detailed in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

Student Ethnic Distribution in Hays CISD

	% of Total student population	
Ethnic distribution	1996–1997	2001–2002
African American	2.6	3.7
Hispanic	40.3	50.4
White	56.6	45.2
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.3	0.5
Native American	0.2	0.2
Economically disadvantaged	34.4	37.6

As a result, the district that Dr. Hinojosa left in 2002 was radically different from the one he entered in 1997. The differences resulted from his leadership and from the changing population of the community.

Although many changes that occurred in the community were not the direct result of Dr. Hinojosa's efforts, evidence showed that many of the changes were the result of significant events that transpired in the district. These events included the passage of a bond, the removal of the

Confederate flag as a symbol of the Hays High School, and changes made in campus leadership positions. Table 3.3 presents information regarding these significant events.

Table 3.3

Timeline of Significant Events

Significant event	Date
Arrival of Dr. Hinojosa	Dec. 1997
Change in principal, The Academy at Hays	1998
Change in principal, The Impact Center	1998
Change in principal, Buda Elementary	1998
Change in principal, Fuentes Elementary	1998
Change in principal, Hemphill Elementary	1998
Change in principal, Elm Grove Elementary	1998
Change in principal, Kyle Elementary	1999
Change in principal, Tom Green Elementary	1999
Change in principal, Barton Junior High	1999
Change in principal, Hays High School	1999
Change in principal, Wallace Middle School	2000
Change in principal, Dahlstrom Middle School	2000
Confederate flag issue	Summer 2000
Bond issue	2001
Departure of Dr. Hinojosa	August 2002

Gaining Access

Glesne (1999) described gaining access as an important preliminary task. Access refers to the consent of an organization to allow the researcher to go where he wants, observe what he wants, and read whatever document he wants for an agreed time. Initial access was granted verbally; the

superintendent then signed an Agreement to Participate, giving the researcher documented evidence of his willingness to participate. In addition, the school district's interim superintendent offered verbal willingness to participate.

Procedure

During the fall of 2002, the researcher interviewed the recently departed superintendent, 2 central office administrators, 1 recently departed central office administrator, and 4 principals. The interviews were recorded and transcribed to yield a written account of the interviews. Several "jottings" (Glesne, 1999) were taken during the interviews; however, they were neither lengthy nor did they encompass the majority of the data. Rather, these jottings were used as a reminder to the researcher of documents to request and questions to research further. The jottings and transcripts of the interviews were coded and analyzed in an ongoing fashion to allow themes to emerge (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). The coded data was placed into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and sorted by code words. This sort of data analysis allowed the researcher to more clearly see the emergent themes.

In addition to the interviews, the researcher analyzed AEIS data, the District Improvement Plan, the To Résumé document, and the district's organizational chart. The AEIS data provided the researcher with valuable information about student performance, staffing, and funding. The District

Improvement Plan provided insight into the goals and the objectives of the district. The To Résumé document provided the researcher an example of documents that the superintendent used to focus his administrators on student performance. The document analysis primarily took place during the spring of 2003.

The multiple sources of data and multiple instruments for data collection provided for triangulation. Triangulation is a method of increasing trustworthiness in qualitative studies. Member checking, which involves the interviewer sharing interview transcripts and analytic thoughts with research participants to make sure their ideas are represented accurately (Glesne, 1999), was conducted in an effort to improve trustworthiness of the research.

Instrumentation and Data Collection

Instrumentation

Protocol development. The purpose of the case study protocol was to provide organization, procedures, and rules to be followed during the study. Consistent use of the case study protocol increases reliability (Yin, 1994). The case study protocol for this study followed Yin's (1994) suggestions. The four sections that Yin suggested for the case study protocol are overview of the case study project, field procedures, case study questions, and guide for case study report.

The overview of the case study project included background information, substantive issues being studied, and relevant readings on the subject (Yin, 1994). The field procedures included gaining access through a meeting with the superintendent and later the interim superintendent, keeping a personal calendar, maintaining a list of relevant telephone numbers, and keeping a list of items that were to be included in the field packet as well as procedural reminders. In order to meet Yin's third criteria, the field packet included a copy of the case study questions. The copy of the case study questions was kept as a slide show presentation on the researcher's laptop computer and as a hard copy printout.

Field packet. The researcher prepared a field packet for each interview. The field packet consisted of one cassette recorder, one microphone, extra batteries, one blank audio cassette per interview, a copy of the interview questions, a slide show presentation that showed the interview questions (one question per slide), pens, paper clips, and a writing pad. Although very few notes were taken during the interviews, the researcher kept the notes in a folder that was taken to each interview. Each interview cassette was labeled with the interviewee's code (for example, P1 for principal #1) and with the date of the interview.

Data Collection Procedures

The interview. Patton (1990) wrote that interviews help researchers understand how people understand and organize their world. To better understand how people organize and understand their world, one must ask them. Because interviews are an essential source of data (Yin, 1994), semistructured, open-ended interview questions were used as the primary information-gathering tool. This method provided flexibility and allowed themes to emerge without the possible constriction of overly structured, more formal questions. Respondents of the same category (for example, school board members) were asked similar questions; however, because each participant could relate a set of unique experiences, additional questions were posed as needed (Stake, 1995).

The interview questions were modified from existing studies and were field tested prior to the study. The questions were reviewed with two former superintendents in an effort to increase the likelihood that the questions were rational, well stated, and meaningful. In addition, come of the comments of the researcher's dissertation committee influenced the final draft of the interview questions.

Document review. In addition to the interviews, pertinent documents such as the organizational chart and the To Résumé form provided data. These documents were analyzed alongside interview data so that the

particular biases of each can be understood and compared (Hodder, as cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2000)

Other reviewed documents were the District Improvement Plan, AEIS data reports, letters from the superintendent to parents and staff members, and school board meeting notes. These documents are used routinely as sources of data in studies of effective school districts (Ragland et al., 1997; Skrla et al., 1999). Each of these documents provided a different perspective on the school district. For example, the review of the District Improvement Plan provided greater understanding of the goals and objectives of the district. The To Résumé form provided the researcher insight into the types of questions that the superintendent would use to focus his meetings with each principal. Finally, the AEIS data assisted the researcher in assessing the effectiveness of the superintendent's leadership efforts by providing information on student achievement, as measured by TAAS, SAT, ACT, dropout rate, attendance rate, and participation of minorities in advanced classes. In addition to student performance data, the AEIS also provided information regarding staffing and budgeting within the district. These specifics were also important in analyzing the leadership efforts of the superintendent.

Data Analysis

One of the main tasks of any inquiry is to analyze data to develop conclusions. The qualitative nature of this study naturally required a qualitative approach to the analysis of data. There are many alternate perspectives on how to conduct qualitative data analysis. This researcher used a perspective of data analysis similar to that of Dey (1993). Dey conceived of data analysis as a process of resolving data into its constituent components to reveal their patterns and themes. This process is subdivided into three subprocesses: describing, classifying, and connecting.

Using Dey's (1993) conception of data analysis, the researcher analyzed field notes, transcripts of recorded interviews, recorded interviews, and document reviews. The analysis and coding were ongoing throughout the study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). For example, transcriptions of each recorded interview were read and reread to discern any themes within the data. To help detect any themes, the data was coded by looking for important concepts or metaphors within the data (Bogdan & Biklen; Coffey & Atkinson).

Coding is a method of assigning tags or labels to the data based on concepts within the data. The purpose of coding is to condense massive amounts of data into analyzable units by creating categories (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). Just as there are multiple perspectives on how to conduct qualitative data analysis, there are also multiple points of view on how to code

data. This researcher conducted the coding in an effort to notice relevant phenomena and identify themes and patterns. The list of codes was created as the researcher analyzed each of the transcripts. The list of codes changed as the analysis continued.

The specific process that the researcher followed was to read each transcript independently. Then, the researcher jotted notes down on each transcript. Once this was completed for each interview, the researcher began to see themes emerging. However, in an effort to be more meticulous, the researcher went back through each interview and changed each jotting into a code. The code, the respondent's identity, the actual quote, and the line number(s) where the quote was found were entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Using the spreadsheet allowed the researcher great flexibility in sorting and analyzing the data. Finally, the researcher again took a holistic view to look for themes. The data were collected meticulously and analyzed thoroughly; nonetheless, the researcher took steps to increase trustworthiness.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is to the constructivist as validity is to the positivist. Thus, it is a measure of the likelihood that the information is an accurate representation of the socially constructed reality of the participants. Several methods were undertaken to address the issue of trustworthiness.

The first method, triangulation, is one of the most common means used by researchers. According to Glesne (1999), “qualitative researchers depend on a variety of methods for gathering data.” One purpose for the use of multiple sources of data is to increase the trustworthiness of the data. Glesne wrote, “This practice of relying on multiple methods is known as triangulation” (p. 30). In keeping with triangulation, data were gathered by multiple methods and from various sources in order to overcome the flaws of any singular method. Specifically, interviews were conducted with 3 school board members, 4 principals, 3 central office personnel, and 1 superintendent in an effort to increase the number and variety of data sources. The document review, which included district documents and state accountability measures, provided further data for triangulation. Denzin (1970, p. 301, as cited in Merriam, 1988, p. 69) described this process as methodological triangulation: “The rationale for this strategy is that the flaws of one method are often the strengths of another, and by combining methods, observers can achieve the best of each, while overcoming their unique deficiencies.” Lincoln and Guba (1985) also wrote of the critical importance of triangulation:

> As the story unfolds and particular pieces of information come to light, steps should be taken to validate each against at least one other source or a second method. No single item of information should ever be given serious consideration unless it can be triangulated. (p. 283)

The second method used to increase trustworthiness was member checking. Member checking is the sharing of transcripts, field notes, and

reports with the participant in order to ensure the researcher's representation of the participant's ideas are accurate (Glesne, 1999; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Stake, 1995). Member checks were conducted after the analysis of the interviews; the researcher discussed the interviews with respondents in order to ensure their realities were represented accurately. These discussions also provided an opportunity to collect more data. The new data were analyzed, coded, member checked, and incorporated into the data set from which themes emerged.

The third method used to increase trustworthiness was the researcher's reflection on a statement of personal bias. That is, as a Hispanic doctoral student in the Department of Educational Administration, who has chosen to study a Hispanic superintendent in an ethnically diverse school district, the researcher has a strong bias in this case. The author attests (a) that superintendents of any color can be equally effective leaders, and (b) that something deters Hispanics from seeking and obtaining the position of superintendent in ethnically diverse school districts. This belief is held because, through research, the author has found that most superintendents of color are in majority minority school districts. The author's interest in this topic is also related to his background. That is, the author believes that the increasing number of Hispanic students in public school districts is resulting in an increasing diversity of most Texas public school districts. Because Hispanic superintendents have typically served in districts that are highly

populated by Hispanic students, they may be able to gain insight from this study of a Hispanic superintendent in an ethnically diverse school district into the challenges that lay ahead. The researcher's bias was somewhat limited by the researcher's understanding of the purpose of his research. The researcher understood that the primary purpose of qualitative research is to add to knowledge, not to pass judgment (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). In addition, the dialog between the researcher and members of the research community, during the design of the study and during the data collection and analysis, provided ample opportunity for examination and re-examination of the researcher's bias.

A final method of increasing trustworthiness was the interaction between the researcher and members of the research community. Throughout the study, the researcher received guidance and direction from established members of the research community. These esteemed researchers assisted in the development of the interview guide, assisted in designing the study, and provided guidance during the data analysis.

Limitations

This study had several limitations. The first was the qualitative research methodology used to study this case. Though qualitative methods have advantages, they also have limitations: Qualitative studies cannot be replicated in a different setting or with different participants. Further, this

qualitative study was limited by the researcher's assumptions and biases. Though measures were taken to reduce the affects of these predilections, it is likely they still had some influence on the author's perceptions and presentation of data.

A second limitation was the single case study design. Although the study yielded detailed and rich descriptions of the leadership efforts of a Hispanic superintendent in an ethnically diverse Texas school district, the descriptions were limited to the leadership of one superintendent in one setting. Thus, it cannot be inferred that the findings are representative of all superintendents nor are they representative of all Hispanic superintendents. These issues of limited generalizability are limitations that are inherent to the single case study design and qualitative, naturalistic inquiry.

A final limitation was the retrospective nature of the research. Because the superintendent was no longer the active superintendent in the school district, the researcher was unable to collect data through observation. As a result, a great percentage of the information came from interviews of participants. Although this fact alone does not invalidate the study, the researcher felt that the use of observation would have increased trustworthiness.

Conclusion

This was a qualitative single case study of a Hispanic superintendent who served in an ethnically diverse school district that improved from a TEA accountability rating of Academically Acceptable to Recognized and showed substantial improvement of student performance on various other measures. The purpose of the study was to discern how the role of the superintendent in the district's improvement on student achievement indicators and to discern what challenges he faced.

This chapter presented the research design and methodology of the study as well as a rationale for each. Efforts were made to provide detailed information about each procedure: what was performed, how it was performed, and why it was performed. In addition, a description of the measures taken to increase the trustworthiness of the findings was provided. Chapter 4 provides the reader an account of the researcher's findings, including a description of each theme, with interview data.

Chapter 4

Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to describe the role that a Hispanic superintendent played in changing a district composed of diverse ethnic and socioeconomic groups from one in which some types of children succeeded to one in which all types of children succeeded. Three research questions guided the study:

1. What was the leadership role of the Hispanic superintendent, if any, in transforming the district from Acceptable status to Recognized status?

2. What barriers existed that made the Hispanic superintendent's leadership efforts difficult? Which of these barriers were related to the Hispanic superintendent's race?

3. What factors existed that enhanced the Hispanic superintendent's leadership efforts? How were these factors related to the superintendent being Hispanic?

This chapter contains a description of the major themes and findings pertaining to these questions that emerged from the data analysis. The sources of these data were interviews, office documents, newspaper articles, and information found on the AEIS. The researcher gathered these data and applied open-coding methods in an effort to determine what role, if any, the

case of study played in the improvement of district-wide student academic performance. The theoretical framework for the analysis was Leithwood's (1994) transformational model of leadership, which describes six facets of leadership that result in changes in organizational culture, individual beliefs, and increases in employee motivation. The six components of Leithwood's model are (a) identify and articulate a vision, (b) foster the acceptance of group goals, (c) convey high performance expectations, (d) provide appropriate models, (e) provide intellectual stimulation, and (f) provide individualized support. Using this framework, ongoing analysis resulted in themes and subthemes; some correlated to Leithwood's model and some did not. The following themes emerged:

1. creating a shared vision,
2. developing systems of management and control,
3. building capacity, and
4. charisma.

Figure 4.1 is a representation of the interactions of these themes.

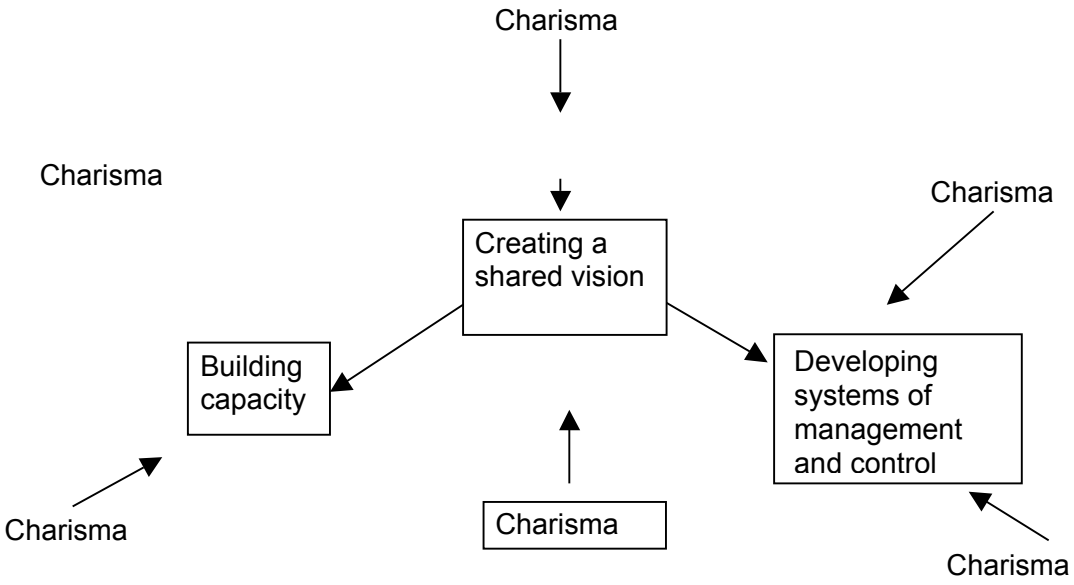

Figure 4.1. The four aspects of leadership.

According to the data, Superintendent Hinojosa first created a shared vision and then established systems of management and control. These systems were put in place to ensure that administrative and educational practices increased the likelihood of attaining the vision. At the same time as he was developing systems of management and control, Dr. Hinojosa worked to build the capacity of his staff and of the community leaders so that they had the resources and ability to fulfill the vision. Throughout the process, Dr. Hinojosa's charismatic style of leadership influenced people's willingness to do whatever it took to attain the vision and in some instances to make his wishes come true. The following sections elaborate further on each of the themes.

Creating a Shared Vision

In this case, creating a shared vision of a district in which all kids could be successful was one way that the Dr. Hinojosa affected district-wide achievement for all students. That is, in many instances his actions, both conscious and unconscious, communicated his vision for the school district. According to Bennis & Nanus (1997), in order for a successful change in the beliefs and attitudes of an organization to occur, a clear and compelling vision must be created. In this case, the vision that was created was clear and compelling. Figure 4.2 illustrates the creation of the shared vision. The pages that follow will document the superintendent's behaviors and characteristics as well as the situations, which resulted in a shared vision.

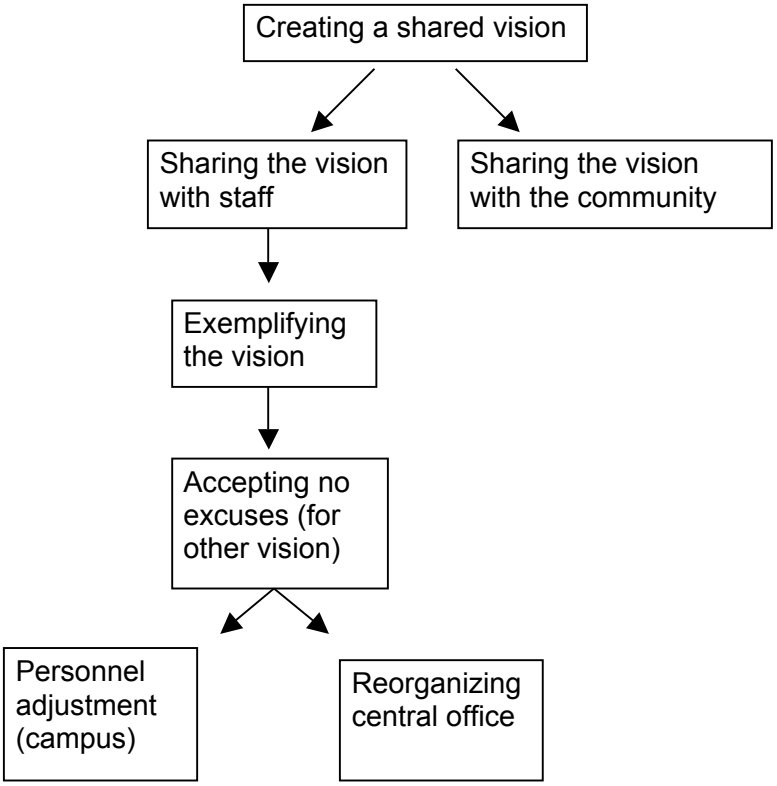

Figure 4.2. Creating a shared vision.

Dr. Hinojosa stated, “I worked the hardest at not allowing people to denigrate or downgrade students or make excuses. By the time I left, people believed that the students could achieve regardless of where they came from or what kind of background they had.” Ample evidence demonstrated that principals believed that Dr. Hinojosa’s vision for this district was that all kids would be successful in their learning; for example, according to P1, the superintendent “believes that every kid that walks through the doors deserves a good education.” Another principal, P2, commented, “He wanted us to be innovative and creative. He wanted us to reach all children.” Statements such

as these were made in a manner that suggested that the principals believed that there should be no other vision. The principals believed that the vision that all children would be successful in their schools was a rational and realistic one. Furthermore, they believed that they shared the superintendent's vision. Thus, the principals assisted the superintendent in creating a shared vision by taking actions at their respective campuses that would encourage their staff members to adopt the new vision.

When asked indirectly to describe the beliefs of staff in the district, principals' and central office administrators' responses demonstrated that the belief that all children could be successful had become part of the organizational culture. Statements such as "we believe that all kids can learn" and "all kids can learn—it is our job to help them" demonstrated that the efforts to establish a shared vision of a school district in which all children would be successful was clear, compelling, and consistently believed. Statements such as these were made by all but one of the people interviewed.

That the principals believed their teaching staff shared the vision that all kids would be successful in their learning was important; however, equally, if not more, important was the change in the beliefs of some members of the district leadership. The belief system of some district staff began to shift from one in which some kids were considered to have no chance for success to a belief that all kids could be successful; this was essential to the district

moving foreword in its efforts to enable all children to be successful. This change in beliefs demonstrates the effect Dr. Hinojosa had on the school district.

Communicating the Vision

The articulation of the new belief system and the vision associated with it resulted from constant action by the superintendent. The creation of a shared vision of a district in which all kids could succeed was paramount to his success at increasing student academic performance in this diverse school district. The vision was communicated to campus leaders, central office administrators, teaching faculty, community groups and any other stakeholders that would listen. According to CO3, “Employee beliefs changed as a result of his constant communication of his belief that all kids can succeed and that there were no excuses for kids not succeeding.” Dr. Hinojosa ensured that all campus staff understood his vision. One way he did so was to make presentations to the administrative and teaching staff on a regular basis. CO3 stated that in order to make sure that the message was always the same, “he would carry his laptop around to all the campuses and make presentations using the same slideshow.” As a result of his efforts to communicate the vision in a clear and compelling way, “employee beliefs changed as a result of his constant communication of his belief that all kids can succeed and that there were no excuses for kids failing.”

Another way that Dr. Hinojosa increased the school district's (and community's) comprehension of the vision for the school district was to give presentations that articulated his belief in the value of diversity. These presentations focused on the historical perspectives of American society as the "melting pot" and "salad bowl." He made sure that he communicated his belief that society is a salad bowl and not a melting pot. Dr. Hinojosa stated,

> I didn't believe in the melting pot, because in the melting pot you give up your culture to assimilate into the dominant culture. I believe in the salad bowl analogy, in which you take a beautiful green salad and you add the richness of the tomato, the richness of the onion, and the richness of other ingredients so that what you have tastes much better than plain lettuce.

His perspective was that in the salad bowl ideology, the mainstay of the salad was the lettuce (Eurocentric and Caucasian). However, the salad needed other components: the richness of tomatoes, croutons, olives, and seasoning to enhance the flavor. Ultimately, the addition of these diverse elements would serve to increase the value of the salad (society). The salad would be much more flavorful than plain lettuce.

Presentations that included the discussion of the salad bowl analogy often created dissonance within the community and the school system. In fact, Dr. Hinojosa found that some people were actually angered by his comments; he had to deal with the political backlash of his beliefs and his efforts at the enculturation of these beliefs within the school system. In regard to the anger created by his beliefs, Dr. Hinojosa commented, "I got into

trouble my first semester there because I made a speech about how I did not believe in the melting pot." Although dealing with the backlash took time and energy that could have been used elsewhere, the superintendent believed that it was well worth it. He believed that expressing his views up front and honestly helped him demonstrate what he expected for the school district. Again, this sort of communication of beliefs helped him get the message across to stakeholders that all kids were of value, that all kids were important, and that all kids deserved an equal opportunity to an excellent education.

As described above, this particular superintendent went to great lengths to communicate the vision and to establish it within the district. He expected all staff members, from his executive leadership team to principals to classroom teachers, to believe in the vision. Any employee of the district who did not share this vision was not tolerated. Dr. Hinojosa took actions such as formal and informal meetings with the employee, growth plans, reassignment, and even removal to help the employee understand the new vision and to encourage the employee to embrace the shared vision. These actions were taken with employees at every level in the organizational hierarchy, from the executive level to the teaching force.

Dr. Hinojosa made sure that his principals clearly understood the vision and recognized the importance of the vision being shared by all leaders in the district. Respondents made statements such as, "he did a really good job of communicating to principals" and "It doesn't matter what your demographics

are, it doesn't matter where you live, it doesn't matter how many working parents you have—the standard has to be higher for everybody." Once the principals shared these beliefs, it became their responsibility to take actions that would encourage all students to be successful in their learning. The principals had to take measures to ensure that their staffs shared the vision, and they had to institute systems that would allow them to monitor the success of all students as well as to develop interventions for students falling through the cracks. In this role as the instructional leader of the campus, principals stated that they required their staff to "work with kids at the level that they are at." The principals had to make sure that every child received and excellent education. Principals required staff at each campus to keep expectations high. The principals refused to settle for partial success. Two of the three principals stated their philosophy was to "not give up on any child."

No Excuses

As illustrated above, the vision that all kids within the school district could be successful arose from beliefs that were clearly communicated by the superintendent. One of the significant beliefs was a "no excuses" attitude. In order for the vision to be realized, the superintendent felt that it was important to instill this "no excuses" attitude in the district. Just as with other areas of importance, Dr. Hinojosa worked diligently at communicating the importance of this belief.

As a result of the constant communication that the school district would become a place where all kids would be successful, staff began to believe that there were no excuses for children failing to learn. CO1 stated that there was “a real clear understanding that there aren’t any excuses for kids not being successful.” Similarly, CO3 said, “The staff began to believe that there were no excuses for student failure.”

Beliefs such as these were not always prevalent in this school district. In fact, some groups of people in the school district believed that some kids would not be successful in attaining an education, regardless of what the school did. CO1 articulated these sentiments: “I think that there had been a subtle underlying belief that not every kid (especially minorities) can actually achieve.” Similarly, SB1 stated, “In the past, there were teachers and some staff who tended to discount certain students, you know, certain classes of students. They believed they couldn’t do anything with them.” According to SB3, “There was a philosophy that some kids could not learn. It wasn’t the majority of the community.”

Personnel Adjustments

Principals. Principals that did not believe that all kids could be successful did not last long. According to CO2, these principals fell by the wayside: “The weak and the shallow left and we replaced them.” At the end of the Dr. Hinojosa’s tenure, not a single principal remained in the same position

as when he came to the district. Thus, as a result of the superintendent's careful communication of the vision and no tolerance for those that did not share it, the principals of the district shared his beliefs: All district principals believed that all kids could be successful in their learning, and that they as school administrators were responsible for making sure that all kids were successful in their learning. This was evidenced by statements made by each interviewed principal. For example, when asked about beliefs at their campus, P1 stated, "We believe all students can learn." P2 commented, "I think that there is a real clear understanding that there aren't any excuses for kids not being successful." Similarly, P3 responded, "All kids can learn." P4 stated, "That vision came from [Dr. Hinojosa]. All kids can learn and it's our job to help them learn."

Central office staff. Although it is the principal's job to help students learn, and the role of the principal is very important to student achievement and to the district's ability to meet its mission, principals are not the only stakeholders who needed to share the superintendent's vision. The beliefs of central office staff also came under scrutiny. The superintendent's interactions with the central office staff resulted in a complete reorganization of central office. Upon his arrival, Dr. Hinojosa conducted interviews with current principals and central office administrators. The purpose of these interviews was to gain two insights. First, he needed to ascertain whether their beliefs matched his. In other words, he interviewed central office

administrators to determine if they believed that all kids could be successful or if they believed in focusing on a select few students from middle and high socioeconomic status. From these interviews, he ascertained that several high-ranking central office administrators had “a subtle underlying belief that not every kid (especially minorities) can actually achieve.”

A second purpose for the interviews was to determine a match between staff members’ abilities and their job function(s). Through this process, Dr. Hinojosa learned that some central office administrators were not being effective because they did not have the knowledge, skills, and/or beliefs to perform their duties. Thus, he had to take action, which resulted in several personnel changes. For example, one central office administrator was moved into another position in central office. The move was made as a result of data that showed that the individual was a better fit for the new position. As a result of the change, the administrator became more effective at his. Another example was the move of one member of the executive team to a less prestigious position that carried less responsibility. This move was also made on the basis that the administrator was currently ineffective. The reorganization of the central office resulted in a more effective staff who could better support the campuses in their efforts to provide a quality education to all children. Although the moves resulted in a perceived overall gain in organizational effectiveness, some of the moves generated a political backlash for the superintendent.

Personal Characteristics of the Superintendent

The change in beliefs was partly due to the superintendent's actions and personal characteristics. For example, Dr. Hinojosa used his personal background as a story that not only motivated stakeholders, but also deflated oppositional beliefs about student achievement. He would hold himself up as an example to those who did not believe that Hispanic students were interested in education or capable of achieving high levels of academic success. Because he was born in Mexico, grew up in an inner-city environment, and was from a modest financial background, he was able to dispel the myths that people in the district had about the ability of Hispanic students to succeed. Often, these beliefs surfaced as low expectations. Dr. Hinojosa described these beliefs with the term "pobrecito syndrome." Loosely translated, this means "poor little one syndrome." In essence, he wanted to make sure that Hispanic students who faced challenges such as economic disadvantage, limited English proficiency, parents with low levels of educational attainment, and limited readiness for school were not victims of the soft bigotry of low expectations. He would say,

> Look at me. I was born in Mexico and I grew up in a large family with little formal education. Yet, here I am. I have a doctorate and I am superintendent of this school district. If I can do it, anyone can do it. There are no excuses for students not succeeding.

Indeed, the administrative staff members that were interviewed found it hard to argue with this reasoning.

Sharing the Vision with the Community

Changing school district employees' beliefs about appropriate expectations for all students was only part of the struggle. In addition to working with the school district employees, Dr. Hinojosa had to ensure that the community believed in the vision that he was trying to establish. This was somewhat difficult, given the original constitution of his school board and the power structures that existed in the community and central office at the time of his hiring. Specifically, the board of trustees included some members that did not share the superintendent's beliefs and vision. Changes such as reorganizing the central office, holding principals accountable for all children, and instilling an appreciation of diversity resulted in the board of trustees turning against the superintendent.

Even though Dr. Hinojosa had made efforts to work with his board of trustees on the new vision, some members would not have their beliefs swayed. These members had very different beliefs. According to CO3, "The district is composed of a community on the north side and one on the south side. I think that there has been a belief system that one community may be superior to the other, especially students from one community compared to the other." The board members that disagreed with the superintendent on the

vision that all kids could be successful were most interested in the education of students on the north side and less interested in those on the south side of the district. P1 also commented on a similar attitude that was held in the community and by some board members. This principal stated, “There is a group of old timers that do not believe that all kids can learn.” Overcoming these beliefs was difficult. In fact, when asked, interviewees commented that they did not believe that the members of the old regime—the regime that did not believe in all students having the ability to be successful—never really changed their beliefs. Rather, they were voted out of power.

This voting out of the old regime board members occurred at a time when a line was drawn in the community. Simply put, the community had to choose between siding with the new superintendent and his vision or with the old regime board members and maintaining the status quo. The standoff came to a head at a meeting in which the renewal of Dr. Hinojosa’s contract was an action item on the board agenda. The voting resulted in a 3-3 tie, with one person abstaining. At this time, the community rose up in support of Dr. Hinojosa. Two people decided to run for a position on the board of trustees. They ran against board members who did not want to renew the superintendent’s contract. The citizens ran on the platform that they supported the superintendent and his reforms. These candidates won and thus, the beliefs of the board and those of the superintendent became congruent.

There were several factors that resulted in this grassroots movement in the community. First, the tone in the community changed. According to one principal, “I think the tone changed. Those that really believed that kids could [learn] and wanted to be involved came forward and got involved. Whereas before I think they believed it but they weren’t voicing it.” This empowerment of the community to voice their opinions was a result of the many hours that the superintendent spent meeting with community members and developing an open forum with honest dialog. Additionally, the grassroots movement resulted from the community noticing changes in their schools and appreciating the changes. For example, community members were empowered and asked to take a greater part in decision making. Parents and community members had an increased role in site-based decision-making teams, district improvement committees, and various other committees that involved changes in the school. Parents and community members were treated as customers in the new system. They had their calls returned within 24 hours and they had greater access to principals and the superintendent as a result of the institution of an open-door policy. Lastly, they noticed that the schools were beginning to be successful with students that the schools traditionally failed. These factors led to the community rising up to change the composition of the board to show their support for the new superintendent.

Finally, the grassroots movement to support Dr. Hinojosa was affected by the rapidly changing demographics within Hays CISD. The school district

was experiencing fast growth, with most of the new citizens coming from a neighboring urban area. Many of these new citizens had beliefs that were similar to the superintendent's. One principal discussed the beliefs of the new citizens: "The new people in the district have really bought into [Dr, Hinojosa's] vision that all kids can learn." They believed that given an equal opportunity to succeed, all kids would be successful. This influx of new blood did not have any ties to the old regime school board members and therefore did not feel any pressure to side with them. In addition, many of these new citizens were from diverse ethnic backgrounds themselves. As a result, they were very concerned for their children. They needed the school system to provide equitable opportunities to children of all walks of life. Through the efforts of the citizens that shared the vision of the superintendent, the board composition changed to one that supported the needs of all children.

Dr. Hinojosa undertook many efforts to create a vision of a district in which all children would be successful. These efforts involved all stakeholders: central office administrators, campus administrators, teachers, parents, and community members. Through constant communication of beliefs, he made it impossible for a stakeholder to not know his vision for the district. In addition to this constant communication, the superintendent empowered community members so that they would be more involved in the administration of their schools. Several of the interviewees alluded to the fact that "he had many committees and tried to involve many people in the

decision-making." Dr. Hinojosa also made data-driven personnel decisions in an effort to increase the staff's ability to represent the vision that all children would learn. These decisions included hiring new personnel, reassigning personnel, and reorganizing the structure of the central office. The constant communication, inclusion of diverse segments of the population in decision-making, personnel decisions, and reconstitution of the board of trustees resulted in the vision that the district was a place where all children would be successful becoming a shared vision.

Thus, creating a shared vision was essential to the success of the superintendent in his efforts to improve the school district. However, the vision was sustained as a result of other leadership activities undertaken by Dr. Hinojosa. The next section will describe the systems of management and control that were introduced by the superintendent. These systems helped maintain the vision and lead to its realization.

Creating Systems of Management and Control

"Beliefs in educational equity, no matter how powerful or how compelling make little difference in the absence of practices that translate those beliefs into the day-to-day reality" (Skrla et al., 1999).

As described in the previous section, the superintendent's vision for the district was that it would become a place where all children could be successful in learning the curriculum. To realize this vision, many changes

had to occur. One of the first things that occurred was a shift in the mental models of the district leaders and their administrative staff. That is, first the district leaders and their administrative staff had to come to believe that it was possible for all children to successfully learn the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. Furthermore, the administrative staff had to believe that it was their responsibility to ensure that everything possible was done so that children would be successful in this endeavor. These two beliefs had to be shared among all members of the district for the changes in student performance to begin to occur.

Though the beliefs and vision of the district's leaders began to change with the Dr. Hinojosa's arrival, the change in beliefs was insufficient to result in district-wide improvements in student academic performance for all student groups. Practices had to change for these beliefs to translate into measurable changes in student performance. Realizing this, Dr. Hinojosa developed several systems of management and control that would lead to systemic changes in the day-to-day practices of Hays CISD. This researcher identified several systems developed and implemented in Hays CISD that supported improved student performance for all student subgroups. These systems, together with the change in beliefs and the adoption of the new vision, served to create an environment that was conducive to all children attaining a high degree of success in learning the curriculum. The systems identified are as follows:

1. developing a district-wide focus on student performance,
2. developing an articulated and coordinated curriculum,
3. holding people accountable, and
4. allocating fiscal, material and human resources in ways that would further increase student performance.

The creation and implementation of these systems helped Hays CISD become a district in which excellence was achieved by all student subgroups. Figure 4.3 is a graphical representation of these systems and how they interact to achieve the vision.

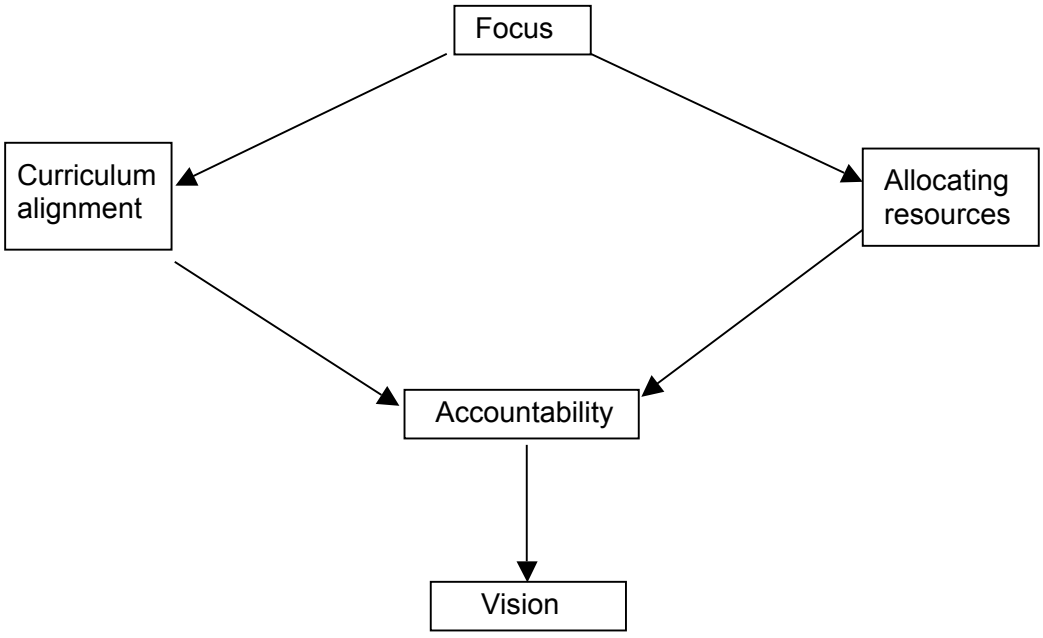

Figure 4.3. Systems of management and control.

Developing a District-Wide Focus on Student Performance

Hays CISD had a definite, clear focus on students attaining high levels of performance on state assessments as well as on other academic measures, such as participation in advanced courses, participation in the recommended or distinguished graduation plan, and increased success on college entrance exams. School board members, central office administrators, and campus principals all felt that they were responsible for each student's success; they felt that it was their responsibility to make sure that all students performed at high levels. With regard to Superintendent Hinojosa, one central office administrator commented, "He focused on student performance and held principals accountable for all students' performance." The superintendent's focus on student performance eventually resulted in this focus becoming adopted by the school board, central office administrators, and campus principals. One school board member explained, "It is easy to say that everybody focuses on student achievement."

This type of focus did not result by mere chance; nor did it result from only the superintendent's verbal communication that it was his belief that the district should focus on increasing all students' performance. This sort of district-wide focus on student performance was the result of multiple factors and actions initiated or spearheaded by the superintendent. One of the actions Dr. Hinojosa undertook that increased the focus on student

performance was the creation of the Student Performance Council. The Student Performance Council was composed of campus principals, the assistant superintendents, and Dr. Hinojosa. A group such as this is common in many districts; however, the group usually does not have a symbolic name, and the meetings are simply described as “principals’ meetings.” The symbolism of including “student performance” in the name of the group was not lost on Dr. Hinojosa. Dr. Hinojosa stated, “I changed the concept and we started calling ourselves the Student Performance Council. So [we created change] immediately just by symbolically saying we are here to focus on student achievement.”

Whereas the symbolism of the name increased the focus on student performance, other attributes of the manner in which this group functioned were more influential in making the district more focused on student performance. Specifically, the members of the Student Performance Council (SPC) understood that the purpose of their meetings was to discuss topics related to student performance. According to one interviewee, “The SPC meets to discuss issues related to student achievement. Curriculum and instruction were the primary topics of discussion.” Some examples of topics that the SPC would focus on are learning how to disaggregate and analyze data, determining what appropriate instructional interventions existed for certain situations, and discussing how campuses were being successful in situations that others were not. Interviewees stated that these meetings

occurred twice a month and that Dr. Hinojosa typically led the meetings. Topics that were not directly related to student performance were disallowed in SPC meetings.

In addition to narrowing the focus of the discussions held during SPC meetings, consistent communication of the focus to all groups was a factor in developing a clear sense of direction and focus. When speaking about the superintendent, one interviewee stated, “He communicated to the principals that they were going to be given a lot of autonomy and authority, but they would be accountable for student learning on their campus.” All the principals interviewed agreed that Dr. Hinojosa constantly focused on how important it was that the principals focus their efforts on increasing student performance. He would show up at campuses and walk the halls and talk to staff members about student performance. He also would communicate with the community and with the board of trustees so that they understood that it was important for all stakeholders to focus on student performance. In addition to directly meeting with parents, community, and staff to discuss student performance, the superintendent used the principals to help spread the message. One principal described how this occurred: “Parents are shown and told how well all kids are doing at this school. This is done through our monthly principal chats. This helps to show them that all kids can be successful.”

In addition to verbally communicating the focus on student performance, the superintendent also enhanced focus by including student

performance data in the superintendent and principal evaluation documents. According to board members, Dr. Hinojosa pushed for the development of the Superintendent Evaluation Document. This document outlined the outcomes that the board of trustees expected the superintendent to achieve. The outcomes always involved some sort of measurable gains in student performance. According to one school board member, “The philosophical beliefs of the board and the superintendent have been imbedded in documents such as the superintendent evaluation.” By imbedding beliefs and student performance outcomes into the superintendent’s evaluation document, the school board and the superintendent ensured that these outcomes would be the school district’s principle area of focus. As an added measure, Dr. Hinojosa would share the outcomes that he was asked to deliver with his principals. By doing so, he would make sure that they all understood what needed to be accomplished. This articulation of needed focus and definition of how success would be measured was seen by district leaders as an important reason for the changes that occurred in the district. These changes in beliefs and focus needed to be translated into actions in the classroom. This meant that the district’s curriculum and its implementation needed to be addressed.

Developing an Articulated and Coordinated Curriculum

Even as the district was acquiring new beliefs, sharing a vision, and gaining focus, Dr. Hinojosa initiated a move to address the district's curriculum and its delivery. This need was uncovered primarily through a curriculum audit. One central office administrator described the curriculum audit as providing a "blueprint for what needed to be done."

An outside group conducted the audit, which uncovered a need for the district to create a curriculum that was more coordinated and better articulated. Curriculum articulation, as defined by Fenwick English (2000) in *Deciding What to Teach and Test: Developing, Aligning, and Auditing the Curriculum*, refers to the vertical connectivity of the school. Curriculum coordination refers the extent to which there is horizontal focus and connectivity within the school or school system. In other words, a well-articulated curriculum is one in which teachers at each grade level know what they should be teaching and how it connects to learning that occurred in previous grades and that will occur in future grades. Coordination means that teachers within the grade level and across the district are teaching the same essential knowledge and skills.

Once the need for improving the Hays CISD curriculum and other results of the audit were shared with Dr. Hinojosa and the school board, these deficits became an impetus for change. As a result, Dr. Hinojosa and the board developed timelines for the creation of new curriculum. Dr. Hinojosa

then made sure that district personnel understood the urgent need for these documents to be created. One school board member explained, “The pressure and the priority that the board put on the curriculum alignment made it easier for the staff to understand how much time and money needed to be spent toward that area.” Dr. Hinojosa assisted his staff by devoting great amounts of resources to the development of the curriculum. One step in the process was to hold book studies on curriculum development to increase the staff’s capacity to develop a valuable curriculum. In addition, the district staff benchmarked other school districts that were believed to have high-quality curricula. Dr. Hinojosa also initiated agreements with property-rich Chapter 41 school districts. As part of the agreement, Hays CISD purchased curricular materials from the Chapter 41 school districts.

The audit, book studies, benchmarking of other districts, purchasing of curricular materials, and in-house development of curriculum resulted in each teacher having access to a document that described what other teachers in a content area were teaching, within the same grade level and outside the grade level. This helped ensure focused and coherent instructional practices. Interviewees considered this to be one of the reasons that student academic performance improved in Hays CISD.

Holding People Accountable

In addition to establishing a new focus and curriculum, a method of holding people accountable for achieving student performance goals had to be established. That is, a system needed to be developed and implemented that would hold each campus principal and staff accountable for the academic performance of their children. One way of approaching this task would be to have each campus use the same procedures, the same scope and sequence, the same materials; that is, to make all campuses consistent in the way they approached education.

This method of approaching accountability was not the method that was followed in Hays CISD. In this district, principals acted as the chief executive officers of their respective campuses. Thus, each campus was given the autonomy to meet the needs of the students by whatever means necessary. Importantly, however, whereas the means to achieving high student performance for all students were negotiable, that all students would be successful was not. That is where Dr. Hinojosa's accountability systems came into play. One interviewee commented, "Of course, you had your minimum standards…but for the most part you had the autonomy to look different based on what your kids need." Another respondent said, "He gave administrators lots of power and lots of authority, but there were also high expectations for student performance." One principal stated, "He shared with us that our campus goals had to take into account his expectation that all

students were to achieve." When asked to discuss this topic, Dr. Hinojosa said,

> That is nothing but my style. I can't hold you accountable if I don't tell you what I want. Now, I can tell you what I want, but you figure out how to do it; you pick your place.

Comments such as these demonstrated that administrators in the district understood that they were responsible for increasing student performance. They also understood that they would be given autonomy in how they chose to meet student performance goals.

In addition to generating this understanding among principals, the superintendent had to develop systems of monitoring student progress at each campus. One way the superintendent worked with his principals was to hold quarterly meetings with each of them. At these meetings the principal and the superintendent would discuss the "to résumé" (see Appendix A). The to résumé was a document developed by the superintendent and given to principals prior to their meeting with the superintendent. The document had several questions for the principal. One of the questions was always related to the academic performance of students at the principal's campus. This resulted in principals' having a better understanding of the extent to which children at their campuses were making progress in their learning. The dialog between the superintendent and the principal would focus on student performance data. According to Dr. Hinojosa,

> The To Résumé process is used to gain formative feedback from all direct reports, including principals, in a direct way. There were quarterly meetings for a minimum of an hour of face time with the superintendent. Some of the questions were the same [each quarterly meeting], especially about relationships. Other questions varied from time to time depending on the issues pertinent at the time. This [process] allowed me to monitor the progress on each campus without micromanaging. It also allowed me to build strong relationships with each of the principals.

If students were not meeting expectations, principals would have to explain why this was the case and would also be required to develop a plan for remedying the situation. The review of student performance data took place in a face-to-face meeting with the superintendent, further emphasizing to the principals that they would be held accountable for student success.

Dr. Hinojosa had other means of holding campuses accountable for student performance. For example, student performance was a criterion that was used to assess each principal's effectiveness. According to several respondents, Dr. Hinojosa "held principals accountable for student achievement." Another respondent commented, "Some principals fell by the wayside. The weak and the shallow left and we replaced them." According to Dr. Hinojosa, "Five of the principals that left—I put on growth plans, and all five selected out." The result of the pressure that the superintendent applied was that within 3 years, every school had a new principal and began showing signs of success. This is related to the fourth system of management and control used by the superintendent: allocating resources in order to increase student performance.

Allocating Fiscal, Material, and Human Resources in Ways That Would Further Increase Student Performance

As the leader of the school district, Dr. Hinojosa had ultimate responsibility for the prudent allocation of fiscal, material, and human resources. In Hays CISD, the allocation of these resources was always made with student performance in mind. For example, as stated earlier in this chapter, the superintendent reorganized the central office and moved principals from their campuses to other positions. Dr. Hinojosa's decision making regarding human resources was seen as one of his strong points and one of the important factors in the district's improvement. When asked about factors that have influenced the district staff's beliefs regarding student performance, one principal stated, "He hires the right people." A central office administrator echoed this sentiment, commenting that the "hiring of new principals" was one of the most important ways that the superintendent affected district-wide changes in beliefs, practices, and results.

When asked about his personnel decisions, Dr. Hinojosa related that he saw himself as the coach of a team, and in order for him to be successful as the coach, he needed to be able to choose his players. Dr. Hinojosa and those people interviewed all felt that the process by which new principals were hired was one of the most important new processes initiated by the

superintendent. Dr. Hinojosa stated that he had used a very elaborate process to select new principals. He described the process as follows:

> Principal positions were hired just like a superintendent search. They had to write a three-page letter about how they matched the profile [of the position]. If they didn't match the profile or if they just submitted a resume, we threw it out. A lot of people self-selected out; so, we got down to the people to interview. When they came into interview, it was not a traditional interview. They had to do an in-basket activity. Then they had to make a presentation on power point for 45 minutes about how they matched the profile. Then they would have to answer questions based upon the specifications we put together on their presentations.

The result of this process was that the district hired some great principals. Each of the principals hired using this process was successful. According to Dr. Hinojosa, "There was one occasion when the process was not followed and that instance resulted in the hiring of a principal that was unsuccessful."

Although hiring the right people was important to the success of the district, supervising principals and central office staff that were not being effective was equally important. The superintendent used quantitative data related to student performance and qualitative data from observations, interviews, and surveys to determine who was being successful and who was not. Those that were not being successful were put on a growth plan, reassigned, or encouraged to seek an assignment in another district. Dr. Hinojosa gave an example of this practice improving the performance of the district: "One of them I reassigned because their school was very underperforming. I did reassign her to a central office position, and now she

has become very successful in the job." Another example was offered by a respondent, who described Dr. Hinojosa reassigning a central office administrator that was "out of the loop" to a position as an assistant superintendent. The new assistant superintendent was said to have been a great asset in focusing the district on student performance. Decisions such as these were difficult to make because of the potential political ramifications; however, the superintendent felt that it was imperative to be decisive and to behave in a manner consistent with the beliefs that he was communicating.

Although the allocations of fiscal and material resources were not as politically charged as the allocation of human resources, they were still areas of possible conflict. Again, decisions about how to allocate these resources were based upon student performance. The facilities within the district were upgraded in an effort to improve the learning environment. Bond programs were initiated in order to help pay for the upgrades to facilities. Some people considered the upgrades to be too outlandish; however, the superintendent communicated over and over that the students in this district deserved the best in everything, from their educators to their learning environments.

By developing systems that created focus, aligned curriculum, held people accountable, and allocated resources with student performance in mind, the superintendent was able to lead the district forward so that it became a place of equity and excellence. These systems combined with the development of a shared vision were two of the biggest components of the

changes that occurred in the district. The next section of this chapter describes the steps the superintendent took to increase the capacity of the district staff, the board of trustees, and the community to take the actions necessary to make this district a place where all types of children were successful.

Building Capacity

Previously in this chapter, reassignment, hiring, and exit of staff were discussed as methods used to create a school system in which everyone believed that all students could be successful. In addition to these actions, the superintendent took a series of actions that resulted in the district staff, the board of trustees, and the community becoming ready and capable to act in ways that would result in the district becoming a place where all children would be successful; that is, realizing the vision. Figure 4.4 is a graphical representation of this theme.

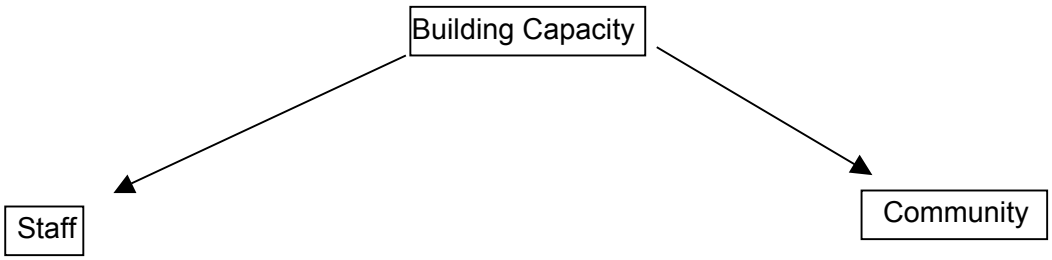

Figure 4.4. Building capacity.

These specific actions included giving presentations, holding retreats, leading book studies, and scheduling professional development activities involving outside consultants. These actions resulted in district staff, the board of trustees, and the community becoming aware of the needs of the district and actions that could be undertaken to meet the needs. Building the capacity of the district leadership to move the entire district forward was essential. Though the old set of beliefs were changing, the district leaders needed a new set of tools to help them to change the practices at the campus and in central office in order for the district to become one in which all student groups performed equally well.

During SPC and Executive Leadership Team meetings, Dr. Hinojosa presented information to his administrators on topics related to student performance. For example, he would demonstrate to his staff how they should disaggregate their campuses' student performance data. These sessions described what principals should look for and also provided opportunities for

sharing ideas related to what successful campuses in the district were doing. More intensive training on these topics was provided by the University of Texas at Austin Dana Center's program, Educational Improvement Network.

According to one central office administrator,

> The collaboration with the Educational Improvement Network helped us develop our improvement plans and our procedures. It helped us align our campus and district. We now have a lot of systems in place that keep us moving in one direction.

Dr. Hinojosa stated, "We did a lot of studies with the Dana Center. We had David Molina, and other people from the Dana Center would come out and work with our team, taught us how to look at data." Clearly, there was a priority on developing the principals' and central office administrators' data-analysis skills. There were other ways in which the Educational Improvement Network helped this district learn how to be successful with all children. Dr. Hinojosa stated,

> We always refined our relationship with the Dana Center until we found a niche, and found out how it was really going to help us. Of course, [it was important] studying the districts that have done well; and we borrowed some of the principles from the Ysletas of the world. Although we saw some positives in the districts we studied, we did not want to go too far, and go too much over that line and focus too much on TAAS.

This capacity-building orientation of the Student Performance Council and Executive Leadership Team is common in other districts that have successfully transformed themselves from average to high performing (Skrla et al., 1999).

When asked to describe how he specifically worked with his staff to influence the change process, Dr. Hinojosa stated,

> Well, we worked hard, but we played hard. We had a lot of fun, and we had numerous staff retreats. I always had a staff retreat with the Student Performance Council and one with the principals. Every summer we had a retreat.

Other administrators commented that retreats were also a common venue for the professional development of district-level and campus-level administrators. At retreats, administrators worked hard at learning, bonded, and had fun. Although retreats are common occurrences in school districts, the overall effectiveness of these forms of professional development is difficult to gauge. However, administrators in Hays CISD counted them as one of the means that Dr. Hinojosa worked with the administrative staff to improve student performance. Retreats with members of the board of trustees also were conducted three times a year. These focused on team building and on learning and teaching material from book studies. The results of these retreats included developing a sense of teamwork, a focus on student achievement, and an understanding of effective educational practices and theories. According to one school board member, “He brought modern educational theory to this district.”

Respondents cited book studies as a primary way the superintendent affected their capacity to lead their schools in ways that would improve student performance. Principals and central office administrators offered

comments such as, “We would do book studies that focused on curriculum,” “We did book studies,” and “We did a lot of professional development through book studies and training.” Typically, the book studies focused on leadership. According to respondents, sources for the book studies included titles such as *Gung Ho! Raving Fans, Circle of Innovation* by Tom Peters, and *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen Covey. In addition to the literature on leadership, book studies also focused on curriculum. The purpose of these book studies was to help the leaders understand why a good curriculum was necessary, how to develop quality curricular materials, and how to be a more effective leader.

In addition to building the capacity of the staff to implement effective approaches to improving equity, the superintendent also worked in many ways to build the capacity of the community to influence the schools in a positive manner. Dr. Hinojosa’s role included bringing disparate parts of the community together so that at his departure, most facets of this community were unified regarding education. This was no small feat in light of the historical circumstances of this community. Historically, this community was actually two communities, each with its own school district. The communities had different demographics, with one considered the higher status community and the other considered an economically challenged one. Although the two districts were consolidated into one, many vestiges of the old stereotypes endured. The superintendent brought the communities together by focusing

on needs, raising and confronting issues, and developing and nurturing political alliances.

Focusing on needs. In order to help the community transition from the old philosophies and traditions to the new vision, the superintendent used a value-added approach. That is, he looked at areas of need and addressed those needs. Areas already operating at a high level of performance were not changed. For example, according to Dr. Hinojosa,

> The community had a lot of pride. The football team was extremely successful. The band was successful. I certainly did not add any value to that, although I certainly encouraged and supported them. These programs did not have to be re-engineered or assessed because they were successful. But the community was changing. When I got there, the district had about 5,500 students, and when I left they had about 8,500 students. So the district grew significantly and the community went through a metamorphosis to some degree.

These changes in the community were a challenge to the superintendent. Through carefully planned actions, the superintendent was able to turn this challenge into an asset.

Whereas the football and band programs were operating at a high level of performance, the academic performance of students in the school district was not as high. By inspecting data that demonstrated the need for improvement and then presenting it to the district employees and the community, the superintendent was able to establish a consensus that the school district needed to improve its academic program. Once the need for improvement was abundantly clear, the superintendent was able to work with

others to develop and implement the actions that would lead to excellent performance for all student groups.

Raising and Confronting Issues

In his efforts to build community, the superintendent did not shy away from contentious issues. In fact, he sought to raise issues to the forefront so the community would have to address them. By engaging in the conflict around the issue and by negotiating agreements, the community would come to a new understanding and belief regarding the issue rather than remaining divided. The use of the Confederate flag as a symbol of the district's high school was a prime example of a contentious issue Dr. Hinojosa raised to force the community to come to some decision regarding how the district was to deal with the issue.

In the case of the Confederate flag, the superintendent sought to build an awareness of institutional practices that were affecting the academic achievement of minority groups. Many in the community considered the Confederate flag a symbol of pride. To the superintendent, however, the Confederate flag was a symbol of discrimination against African Americans and other minority groups. Dr. Hinojosa described how students of the high school, even minority students, were proud of their symbol. He went on to state, "They [the students] would go off to college and then they would

discover what the symbol meant outside of their little world. Then they would come back embarrassed and ashamed that they were part of that."

The debate over the issue was very contentious. On the one hand were some old-timers, members of the community whose families had lived there for numerous generations. Old-timers supported the continued use of the Confederate flag. The old-timers represented the facet of the community that was content with the status quo: keeping the Confederate flag. On a larger scale, the status quo was keeping the school district functioning as it was: maintaining an approach to the education of children that continued to produce a gap between the academic performance of White students and the academic performance of ethnic and socioeconomic minorities.

Opponents of the continued use of the Confederate flag could be characterized as people who were relatively new to the community. These new-bloods were often professionals who had relocated to the community and commuted to work in the urban center that was only a short drive from their new home. Overall, this group was more ethnically diverse than the old-timers. According to the superintendent, "Many of them were middle-class Hispanics that wanted the good suburban life."

This issue polarized the community into two groups for and against the continued use of the Confederate flag. As stated earlier in this section, this issue became the focal point of a power struggle between the old-timers and the superintendent. On this issue, the superintendent was relentless; he

would not back down. The more the superintendent tried to defeat the old-timers, the more they tried to attack him and get rid of him. These attacks were made in press and at school board meetings. Some of these attacks were based on the superintendent's ethnicity. He stated,

> Absolutely, there is no doubt about it [that the attacks were ethnically motivated]. I was relentless, I did not back off. I am not ashamed of my culture. I'm very proud that I was born in Mexico, and people try to use that against me saying that I was going to pledge allegiance to Mexico and not the United States. I mean, it was ridiculous that people use that against me. As they lost power, they tried to use scare tactics to scare the rest of the community. It didn't work.

Developing and Nurturing Political Alliances

The superintendent made overt efforts to develop and nurture political alliances in hopes that the alliances would help him in his efforts to transform the district. Prior to developing alliances, the superintendent first identified the key players in the community. According to one of the principals interviewed, "He knew where the strong voices were, and he sought them out." Another respondent stated that the superintendent would ask them who the key players were in their school communities. The superintendent also discussed the identification of key players. He stated, "To the principals I said, tell me who the movers and shakers are in the community, and they would tell me. Or, I would ask the board members and they would tell me."

Once the key players were identified, the superintendent made efforts to include them in decisions regarding the school district. According to

respondents, Dr. Hinojosa was particularly adept at collaborating with community members. One participant commented, “He met with the community and discussed issues with them head on. He did not ignore them or dance around them.” Along the same lines, one central office administrator stated, “He gained public support because he was up front with everybody. He never tried to keep things under the table.” Some examples of community involvement in decision-making committees were the bond advisory committee and the committee that addressed the Confederate flag issue. Examples of standing advisory committees were the ministerial alliance, bond advisory committee, and the business and community advisory committee. In addition to these committees, Dr. Hinojosa was a part of the effort to establish an educational foundation in the community.

The change in voter turnout for school board elections was evidence of the superintendent motivating the community to take action regarding the direction the school district would take. That is, community participation in school board elections rose greatly. When the Hispanic superintendent was hired, only 175 citizens voted in the school board election. The next year, the voter turnout was nearly 800. After that, it increased to about 2,500. Not only did the voter turnout increase, but the support from the citizenry increased as well. Board members who did not support the changes that the superintendent was making were not re-elected. In their place, voters elected new board members who sided with the superintendent’s agenda.

By focusing on needs, raising and confronting issues, and developing and nurturing community alliances, the superintendent was able to affect change in the district. In addition to doing the right things, the superintendent's personality and charisma may have increased the likelihood of his eventual success.

Charisma

In order to be successful in leading the change effort, this superintendent acted in ways that would create a shared vision, build connections with stakeholders, develop systems of management and control, and build the capacity of the district teachers and administrators as well as the community to achieve the vision. Although these phenomena and processes contributed to this district becoming a high-performing, Recognized district, according to respondents the personal characteristics of the superintendent were essential for change to occur. This section concentrates on the personal characteristics that helped Dr. Hinojosa successfully lead Hays CISD.

Certain characteristics contributed to the superintendent being considered charismatic. When asked about the personal characteristics that affected Dr. Hinojosa's ability to lead the school, respondents described his personality as a very important factor in the transformation of the district. It seems that his extraordinary ability to communicate his message was a

tremendous asset. For example, one central office administrator stated, “He is very charismatic. He delivers the message with the power of a preacher.” Dr. Hinojosa himself stated that he was very capable of working a crowd and exciting them through his rhetoric, energy, and enthusiasm. In addition to being able to deliver a passionate message to English-speaking audiences, Dr. Hinojosa was able to communicate effectively with Spanish-speaking audiences. Whichever language he used, the superintendent always made efforts to deliver a clear, consistent message, regardless of his audience.

Some respondents were as impressed with the superintendent’s ability to listen as they were with his ability to deliver a message. By listening to people, the superintendent was also able to demonstrate that he considered each person valuable to the organization. By showing that he valued each person he was able to gather followers. One principal was obviously amazed that Dr. Hinojosa was able to connect with her from the outset. The principal described her first meeting with Dr. Hinojosa: “He had the personal touch. He remembered my name after meeting me briefly and greeted me with it the next time we met.” Principals felt important because the superintendent was always available to them. He had an open-door policy and established an open-communication environment. One principal stated, “You [principals] could go straight to [Dr. Hinojosa] directly. If you were hitting a brick wall [in trying to work with a central office department], his door was open. It was a nice feeling.” Another principal commented, “We [principals] had a direct link

to the superintendent, and we were always on top of exactly what was going on. I mean, it felt like no information was ever withheld." As a result of the superintendent's willingness to listen, principals and community members shared their opinions and concerns more freely.

Dr. Hinojosa was believed to be a tireless worker. His work ethic helped establish credibility within the district. Other administrators took note of how hard he worked as well as the efforts he made to be at as many functions, district and campus, as possible. For example, one of the elementary principals commented, "He set the example. I think his work ethic spoke very highly to the principals, who spoke very highly to the teachers, which spoke very highly to the parents and to the students." Another respondent stated,

> I have never seen anybody that has the energy and the drive as him. He got up at 4:30 in the morning and would read something related to work. He was up here on weekends. Definitely someone committed to doing what is right for kids and putting the action behind his words.

The school board also took note of how hard he worked. SB3 shared, "He was very, very focused on his work." Knowing that the superintendent was putting such a great deal of effort into leading the district inspired his staff to do the same.

Honesty was another characteristic for which Dr. Hinojosa was admired. Respondents alluded to his always being honest and up-front with

people. This characteristic helped people know where he stood on topics. CO2 stated,

> You could pitch anything at him that you want to. He would listen, and he would make a decision. But if he said yes or no, that was it, end of discussion. You always knew where you stood. I knew I could always give it a shot and walk out of there knowing it was our decision.

CO3 stated,

> You absolutely knew where you stand with him because you can read every emotion straight through his eyes. There were no secrets. Although he was very political, he was not underhanded. If he disagreed, he would say he disagreed and this is why and this is how it is going to be.

SB3 commented, “He didn't play games; he always told the truth. This was one of his strengths. He had the ability to go into any environment and speak honestly to people and they respected him for it.”

Conclusion

This chapter described the research findings related to three basic questions about the leadership of a Hispanic superintendent:

1. What was the leadership role of the Hispanic superintendent, if any, in transforming the district from Acceptable status to Recognized status?

2. What barriers existed that made the Hispanic superintendent’s leadership efforts difficult? Which of these barriers were related to the Hispanic superintendent’s race?

3. What factors existed that enhanced the Hispanic superintendent's leadership efforts? How were these factors related to the superintendent being Hispanic?

One of the findings of this research was that the superintendent played a central role in the effort to increase the academic achievement of all groups of students. A statement made by one of the principals interviewed exemplified statements made by other interviewees. She stated,

> He was the reason. I truly believe that. The superintendent sets the tone. Just in his absence right now, what I have realized is that not only does he set the tone, but the physical presence, the fact that he met with principals routinely, that we had a direct link to the superintendent, and that we were always on top of what was going on….He was the tone-setter, yeah, and he was consistent about holding us to it and holding himself to it. He set the example.

Statements about the barriers that the superintendent faced were mostly related to political issues. Respondents believed that the superintendent was caught in a power struggle between an old regime and a new regime, of which he was a part. Specifically, those interviewed pointed to critical issues such as the use of the Confederate flag as a symbol of the district's athletic program. Another political issue that participants discussed was the political backlash that the superintendent faced after he reorganized his central office. Finally, a barrier (which was also a mitigating factor) was the rapid growth of the district. At one point, Hays CISD was one of the fastest growing districts in the state. As a result, Dr. Hinojosa had to face financial issues as well as difficulties in bringing together the older and more

conservative community members and the newer and more progressive community members.

The respondents stated that Dr. Hinojosa overcame barriers by meeting them head on. Most respondents made numerous references to this tactic. They commented that he was up front with people and was honest about where he stood on issues and where he would be flexible. On issues that were critical to him, he would draw a line in the sand and create an environment in which a person was either with him or against him. Also, his frequent use of quantitative and qualitative student achievement data served to highlight the progress that was being made. He used these successes to communicate to community members and district employees that the district was headed in the right direction. This strategy of being up-front with people helped him win the trust of his staff and his community.

Chapter 5 discusses the findings of this research as they relate to the researcher's chosen theoretical framework. A discussion will follow of how the phenomena studied and the data collected relate to conclusions of others who have asked similar questions. Conclusions based upon this research in relation to similar studies are made, as are suggestions for further inquiry.

Chapter 5

Discussion of Findings, Limitations of Study, Implications, and Recommendations

Introduction

This final chapter contains a discussion of findings and implications of those findings as well as a presentation of the limitations of the study and recommendations for further study. The chapter begins with a review of findings and a discussion of how they relate to the researcher's chosen theoretical framework, Leithwood's (1994) model of transformational leadership. Through this discussion, a presentation of a new model of transformational leadership is developed and used to illustrate how a Hispanic superintendent can effect changes in a diverse school district that result in the improvement of academic success for all groups of children. Following this section, the limitations of the study will be reported. Next, implications for policy and practice will be discussed. Finally, recommendations for future study are presented.

Findings: Where the District is Now

At the beginning of this case study, the school district was chosen because it was led by a Hispanic superintendent, was large (over 7,000 students), had an ethnically diverse student population, and had made

improvements in the academic performance of all student ethnic groups to the point that the district had become a Recognized school district. The researcher's goal was to enter the district and ascertain what role the superintendent played in the improvements in academic performance, what barriers the superintendent faced while making these improvements, and what factors aided him in overcoming these barriers. The researcher found a district whose campus leadership, central office leadership, and board of trustees exhibited a similar set of beliefs, knowledge, and practices in relation to student academic performance. Each group stated that they believed all students could learn and that it was the school's responsibility to make sure that the students were successful.

Through the study it became clear that this belief in equity was not a chance happening. It was the result of conscious acts by the superintendent, Dr. Hinojosa, (a) to create a shared vision of all students being successful, (b) to develop systems and processes that would ensure these beliefs were put into practice, and (c) to build the capacity of the staff and community to meet the needs of all students. Dr. Hinojosa's charisma bolstered the effect of these conscious acts. His charisma made people willing to follow him and willing to rise up and meet the challenges within the school building and in the community. The result of these conscious and unconscious acts was that the beliefs and practices of the organization and the community changed such that momentum developed to ensure that the schools were successful with all

children. Once this momentum developed, it was only a matter of time before the district achieved its vision of being successful with all students. The realization of the vision was achieved in 2001–2002 when the district achieved Recognized status under the TEA's accountability rating system.

The Findings as They Relate to Transformational Leadership

The four aspects of leadership exhibited by the superintendent in this school district were described more fully in chapter 4. In this chapter, these four aspects are discussed in relation to the six dimensions in Leithwood's (1994) model of transformational leadership. The four aspects of leadership that emerged in this study are

1. creating a shared vision,
2. developing systems of management and control,
3. building capacity, and
4. charisma.

Leithwood's (1994) transformational model of leadership has six dimensions:

1. Identify and articulate a vision: Behavior on the part of the leader is aimed at identifying new opportunities for his or her school and developing (often collaboratively), articulating, and inspiring others with a vision of the future.

2. Foster the acceptance of group goals: Behavior on the part of the leader is aimed at promoting cooperation among staff and assisting them to work together toward common goals.

3. Convey high performance expectations: Behavior demonstrates the leader's expectations for excellence, quality, and/or high performance on the part of the staff.

4. Provide appropriate models: Behavior on the part of the leader sets an example for staff to follow and is consistent with the values espoused by the leader.

5. Provide intellectual stimulation: Behavior on the part of the leader challenges staff to reexamine some of the assumptions about their work and to rethink how it can be performed.

6. Provide individualized support: Behavior on the part of the leader indicates respect for individual members of staff and concern about their personal feelings and needs.

The data suggest that each of the six dimensions of transformational leadership existed in Hays CISD. The remainder of the findings section will discuss how the data from the study correspond to Leithwood's dimensions.

Dimension 1: Identify and Articulate a Vision

Theme 1, creating a shared vision, and Leithwood's (1994) Dimension 1 are very similar. According to the interview data, Dr. Hinojosa came into the

district with a preconceived vision of what the district could be. Statements such as “My vision is that there is enough out there for everyone,” “We need to believe in our people and our kids and once we do everything else will follow,” “We need to find solutions to make students be successful,” and “You adapt to your community but you don’t change your core beliefs” imply that Dr. Hinojosa entered Hays CISD with the intent of making changes that would transform the district from a place where some children could be successful into a place where all children could be successful.

Many researchers have discussed the importance of vision (Bass, 1981, 1985; Bennis & Nanus, 1997; Burns, 1978; Johnson, 1995; Leithwood, 1992, 1994) and the greater importance that the organization shares the vision of the leader. Leithwood (1994) described transformational leaders as able to identify new opportunities for their schools and to develop (often collaboratively), articulate, and inspire others with a vision of the future. In this case, Dr. Hinojosa did just that. Although he did not develop his vision for the school district collaboratively, he did work relentlessly to articulate it and to inspire others so that after a time, the vision was shared among the leadership and the community. Susan Moore Johnson (1995) discussed various methods taken by successful superintendents to create a shared vision. In her study, she found that some successful superintendents enter a school district with a vision and then work to get others to embrace and share the vision. Dr. Hinojosa’s actions, knowledge of educational and

organizational theory, and strong work ethic inspired the trust that was needed by his followers prior to their total commitment to the vision. This sort of trust has been discussed as a requirement for transformational leadership (Bennis & Nanus). Those people interviewed trusted Dr. Hinojosa to do what he said he was going to do, to handle matters up front and honestly, and to always communicate openly with them.

As described in chapter 4, Dr. Hinojosa communicated his vision to school personnel and community members through a series of presentations and speeches at meetings of community organizations. Furthermore, personnel actions such as reorganizing central office so that it was oriented to providing support to campus principals helped, and reassigning principals demonstrated his commitment to the vision. In addition, Dr. Hinojosa was able to demonstrate through the use of student performance data from successful schools and school districts that students of all ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds could be successful. By presenting these sorts of data, he was able to show a legitimate opportunity to improve the services provided to all students.

Dimension 2: Foster the Acceptance of Group Goals

According to Leithwood (1994), transformational leaders foster the acceptance of group goals. Dr. Hinojosa's leadership resulted in his staff, the school board, and the community accepting responsibility for meeting the

goals for the school district. The school board and Dr. Hinojosa worked together to develop the goals and then bring about educational change. In the words of one of the board members, the district governance and the district superintendent began to work together as a team of eight (seven board members plus the superintendent). As a result of constant structured learning activities, the school board and Dr. Hinojosa were able to work together to establish goals for the district that were based on the vision that all Hays CISD students would be academically successful. These goals were written into the superintendent evaluation document and later into the district improvement plan. Thus, the goals of the team of eight became an impetus for change in the school district.

Once these goals were articulated in the district improvement plan and the superintendent evaluation document, the superintendent worked to foster the acceptance of these goals by his central office staff and campus administrators. He took actions to inspire cooperation amongst the staff so that the goals could be met. The establishment of the SPC, a monthly meeting of principals and central office staff to discuss student performance issues, was one example of his efforts to inspire cooperation amongst staff. During meetings of the SPC, principals were encouraged to discuss what was working at their campuses and to find ways of implementing practices that were successful in one campus at campuses that were not as successful. In

this way, all principals were involved in the effort to improve the academic performance of all students.

Dimension 3: Convey High Expectations

Leithwood (1994) suggested that transformational leaders must convey high performance expectations by demonstrating the leader's expectations for excellence, quality, and/or high performance on the part of the staff. Establishing high expectations also has been discussed as a necessary element for successful change in studies of districts that have undergone changes resulting in increased academic performance for all student groups (Ragland et al., 1997; Skrla et al., 1999).

Once the goals were established, shared, and understood by all, Dr. Hinojosa set about creating high expectations that each campus would meet the goals and that principals and central office staff would be held accountable for doing so. Holding people accountable is a subtheme of Theme 2 of this study, developing systems of management and control. Holding people accountable describes the accountability systems that were created to monitor the progress of principals in meeting the campus and district goals. These systems included the frequent review of student academic performance data with each principal. These data were disaggregated by ethnicity and socioeconomic status in order to determine the performance of all student groups. In addition, each principal's success in

meeting other goals such as community involvement and increasing connections with teaching staff was formally monitored through the use of the To Résumé. As discussed in chapter 4, Dr. Hinojosa would send each principal a list of preparatory questions prior to their quarterly conference. Based upon the qualitative data obtained from the To Résumé and the quantitative data obtained through formative assessments of student academic performance, Dr. Hinojosa was able to gauge the success of the principals in meeting their goals. If the data suggested that the campus was not progressing satisfactorily, the principal was pressured to create plans to turn things around. If the lack of success continued, the principal was placed on a growth plan. A less formal data collection process was used to hold central office administrators accountable for providing appropriate service to the campuses. Thus, by creating systems to gather, measure, and analyze data, the superintendent held school staffs accountable for meeting the agreed-upon goals.

In addition to developing accountability systems that would convey high expectations for student academic success, Dr. Hinojosa established systems for analyzing, aligning, implementing, and monitoring the curriculum. Developing an articulated and coordinated curriculum, a subtheme within Theme 2 of this study, developing systems of management and control, describes Dr. Hinojosa's awareness that the district needed a curriculum that required students to perform at high levels. Furthermore, the curriculum

needed to be implemented consistently horizontally, and the curriculum needed to show articulation so that the experiences in each successive grade level built upon those of the previous one. Campus principals and central office staff were responsible for monitoring the implementation of the curriculum and addressing any areas of concern.

Establishing accountability systems and coordinating the curriculum were two methods by which the superintendent conveyed high expectations to his staff and community. Thus, consistency was found between Leithwood's (1994) Dimension 3, convey high expectations, and the data in this study.

Dimension 4: Provide Appropriate Role Models

Although no themes or subthemes in this study directly related to Leithwood's Dimension 4, provide appropriate role models, some data demonstrated that Dr. Hinojosa provided appropriate role models to his staff. For example, Dr. Hinojosa used the fact that he was a Mexican American whose first language was Spanish to help convey high expectations for all students, regardless of socioeconomic, ethnic, or language factors. Overt behaviors such as telling his story in front of audiences and asking stakeholders why children with backgrounds similar to his were failing helped defeat deficit attitudes toward students who were culturally, linguistically, or economically diverse. Even when he was not commenting on the topic, the

mere fact that a Hispanic who was born in Mexico, came from poverty, and had a native language other than English was now the superintendent of a school district the size of Hays CISD was symbolic.

Dr. Hinojosa provided appropriate models in other ways too. For example, his staff described him as a tireless worker who often arrived earlier and stayed later than others. He was described as being demanding, accepting nothing less than the best. The respondents commented that he was often seen at campuses walking the halls and talking about student performance to any staff member he met. Principals and central office staff commented that they wanted to work as hard as him and be as dedicated so that the district would be successful.

The collaboration between Hays CISD and the Educational Improvement Network was a third method by which Dr. Hinojosa provided appropriate models to his district staff. Through this collaboration, district staff were able to analyze the process used by other school districts to achieve high levels of academic performance for all student groups. The staff could see that given the appropriate educational practices and equal access to a quality curriculum (English, 2000), all students can learn. Staff learned methods of disaggregated data analysis and appropriate data-driven decision-making processes. As a result, participants saw that their challenges were not unique, and similar districts were successfully overcoming the challenges.

Dimension 5: Provide Intellectual Stimulation

Theme 3 of this study, building capacity, is directly related to Leithwood's (1994) Dimension 5: They both refer to behaviors on the part of the leader that challenge the staff to rethink their assumptions and to investigate new methods of meeting the goals of the organization. Two research studies on effective school districts corroborated the importance of building the capacity of staff through planned activities (Ragland et. al, 1997, Skrla et. al, 1999). By requiring his staff to be involved in learning activities, Dr. Hinojosa effected a change in the beliefs and practices of key people in the school district. Respondents cited actions that provided intellectual stimulation: book studies, retreats, cooperation with other school districts, and numerous presentations on equity given by Dr. Hinojosa. The activities changed beliefs and practices and encouraged his staff to conceptualize the district's problems in different ways and to visualize new solutions. The district and campus leadership came to believe that equity was attainable and they could institute practices that would result in excellence for all student groups. Changes in beliefs and practices are a requirement for changes to become institutionalized (Bass, 1985; Skrla et al., 1999).

In addition to changing the beliefs and practices of his staff through intellectual stimulation, Dr. Hinojosa worked to provide opportunities for community members to examine their mental models and to construct new

ones. This was done primarily through involving community members in advisory committees and providing speeches and presentations on topics critical to the school district and the community. Through this interaction with community members, Dr. Hinojosa was able to communicate information to community members that would influence them to see reality from his perspective. He was able to use his knowledge of educational theory, his belief in equity, and his charisma to make followers out of those who came to know him.

Dimension 6: Provide Individualized Support

Although data were insufficient to warrant a theme or subtheme that directly corresponded to Leithwood's (1994) dimension of individualized support, data from interviews demonstrated that Dr. Hinojosa behaved in a manner that indicated respect for individual members of his staff and concern about their personal feelings and needs. For example, the principals often said that Dr. Hinojosa's open-door policy made them feel important. They felt that they could gain an audience with him any time they needed. They also mentioned that Dr. Hinojosa would always listen to their plans and would give them the opportunity to convince him that their approach was feasible. Dr. Hinojosa himself talked about treating people the way they deserved to be treated. By this he meant treating people based upon their performance and effort. Thus, if an individual demonstrated good judgment, was effective, and

demonstrated other traits and behaviors that were conducive to improving equity and excellence, he or she would receive more freedom and more positive reinforcement. If, on the other hand, the opposite were true, then Dr. Hinojosa would be more directive in his interactions with that person. This is evidence of individual consideration, and this type of leadership can be correlated to situational leadership theories such as Hersey and Blanchard's (as cited in Yukl, 1998).

The superintendent in this study exhibited another leadership characteristic not included in Leithwood's (1994) six-dimension model: charisma.

Charisma

Bass (1985) described charisma as the bedrock of the transformational process. The data from this study illustrate how Dr. Hinojosa's charisma was a factor influencing his followers at every turn. Though charisma is not a dimension of transformation leadership in Leithwood's (1994) model, this research demonstrates that Dr. Hinojosa's ability to lead the changes seen in Hays CISD were, to some degree, the result of his charisma. House (1977) described charismatic leaders as those who affect their followers in such a way that they accept the leader without question, follow the leader without question, and become emotionally involved in meeting the expectations of the leader. Respondents made numerous allusions to wanting to do things in

order to make Dr. Hinojosa happy and to do things in order to keep him from being disappointed. They also talked about wanting to protect him from his adversaries.

Yukl (1998) described charismatic leaders as being able to influence their followers through role modeling. Viewed from this perspective, Leithwood's Dimension 3, convey high expectations, and charisma have commonalities. However, having charisma involves much more than providing appropriate models for followers. Although Dr. Hinojosa modeled traits such as a strong work ethic, integrity, and loyalty, modeling these traits would not be enough to gain the type of devotion that his followers felt.

The extreme commitment to Dr. Hinojosa and enthusiasm toward his vision seemed to be the result of several mechanisms. The first was his ability to communicate the vision of all students being successful. Dr. Hinojosa was described by respondents as "being able to deliver a message with the power of a preacher." He stated that he had "the gift of gab." Many interviewees referred to, in some fashion, his ability to communicate. It seems likely that this characteristic influenced his followers greatly.

Secondly, charismatic leaders tend to increase followership to a greater degree if their strategies for success are seen as innovative. "The more innovative a leader's strategy and the more personal risk to the leader in advocating it, the more likely it is that the leader will be perceived as charismatic if the strategy appears to be working" (Yukl, 1998, p. 319). Dr.

Hinojosa was described as standing up to the old regime and advocating for a new way of doing things. By increasing site-based management and restructuring campus and central office leadership he placed himself at great risk. In fact, the first time the Board of Trustees voted on extending his contract, the vote came back tied and he did not receive an extension until months later, when a new Board of Trustees was elected.

Finally, Dr. Hinojosa was able to influence followers and community members as a result of their disenchantment with current conditions in Hays CISD (House, 1977). Those administrators and school board members interviewed described the presence of an old regime. In essence, what they were describing was a group of people in the district and in the community who were happy with the way things had been in Hays CISD for many years. That is, they were comfortable with the fact that White, middle-class students were successful in attaining a good education, whereas students that were not White or middle-class received an education that prepared them less for postsecondary education. Whereas this group was satisfied with the conditions in Hays CISD prior to Dr. Hinojosa, others were not. These others may have been waiting for someone or something to change the way things were occurring in the district. Dr. Hinojosa became the lightning rod for these people. Their desire for someone to come in to the district and make a change enhanced Dr. Hinojosa's influence. He was able to connect with a group of people whose needs had not been met and to inspire them to

believe that if they followed him he would make the necessary changes to the district so that all children would be successful.

Dr. Hinojosa's ability to connect with historically unrepresented groups, his unusual ability to communicate a message, and his willingness to be innovative and risk-taking were factors that influenced every aspect of his leadership. These three attributes taken together comprise the concept of charisma, the final theme uncovered through this research.

Findings Related to Ethnicity

Through this research, it was hoped that themes would arise that described any effects the superintendent's ethnicity (Hispanic) had on his leadership. Although efforts were made to collect these data, respondents provided little information on this subject. In many instances, ethnicity was not regarded as a factor. Although few respondents made direct references to the superintendent's ethnicity, they made some statements worth noting. CO3 stated,

> The old regime was always critical of him, even to the point of making some harsh and inappropriate comments about his being Hispanic. For example, they said that we were soon going to have to say a pledge to the Mexican flag.

SB1 commented,

> Well, I think his being Hispanic was a bonus. I can say with complete confidence that he was not hired because he was Hispanic. He was hired because he was the best candidate and it didn't ever come up in any of our discussions, his ethnicity. It never came up at all. After we

> hired him, it turned out that I think he has been a tremendous role model for our students. But not only that, coming from the poor background and being from Mexico was a factor because he can speak to that to the teachers and students as an inspirational leader.

In addition to these statements, Dr. Hinojosa's ethnicity was a factor in several other areas. His ethnicity was an either mitigating or deleterious factor, depending on the situation. For example, Dr. Hinojosa's ability to communicate effectively in English and Spanish was a factor in helping him reach facets of the community that had not been reached previously. During Dr. Hinojosa's tenure, communications sent to parents from campuses and from the district office were provided in English and Spanish. Dr. Hinojosa's ethnicity played a role in his beliefs about the abilities of minorities. Based upon his personal experience, Dr. Hinojosa knew that all children could succeed. On several occasions, he commented that if he could succeed, anyone could. This was an especially powerful comment as he was an immigrant, second language learner who grew up in an urban area. Again, although there were not enough data to warrant a theme describing the effects of ethnicity, the data show that ethnicity did play a role, albeit not a major role, in the events that transpired in Hays CISD.

Implications

This study offers several implications pertinent to the practice of preparing and selecting superintendents. The implications are pertinent to

school districts, the Board of Trustees of school districts, and institutions of higher education. This section will first discuss implications related to preparing potential superintendents. Next, implications related to the selection of superintendents will be addressed.

Superintendent Preparation

According to the Preparation Program Requirements Rule (1999) of the Texas Administrative Code,

> The design of the superintendency preparation program resides with the SBEC-approved educator preparation program(s) and curricula and coursework shall be based upon the standards in §242.15 of this title (relating to Standards Required for the Superintendent Certificate). (§242.10)

The standards found in §242.15 are

1. learner-centered values and ethics of leadership,
2. learner-centered leadership and district culture,
3. learner-centered human resources leadership and management,
4. learner-centered policy and governance,
5. learner-centered communications and community relations,
6. learner-centered organizational leadership and management,
7. learner-centered curriculum planning and development, and

8. learner-centered instructional leadership and management (Standards Required for the Superintendent Certificate Rule (1999, §242.15).

This comprehensive set of standards is addressed in various ways at each superintendent preparation program. In addition, as this research evidences, future superintendents need to understand how to create shared visions, to view and change systems using the principles of systems thinking, and to manage the political context in which they perform.

Creating shared visions. The findings of this study clearly demonstrate that superintendents must be skilled in creating a shared vision. Whereas the creation of a personal vision is a simple matter, getting others to share the vision is not (Senge, 1990). Institutions of higher education that are preparing superintendents should be mindful of this and structure learning opportunities that engage their students in activities that encourage the development of consensus-building skills. In this case study, all of the respondents clearly believed in the same vision for the school district. This phenomenon was the result of many conscious acts by Dr. Hinojosa. Institutions of higher education could consider modifying their curriculum so that all students seeking superintendent certification are knowledgeable in the actions that were taken to develop a shared vision in Hays CISD.

Systems thinking. By realizing that the school district is part of the larger social system known as the community, Dr. Hinojosa demonstrated an understanding of systems thinking. Systems are groups of interrelated and interdependent parts that are best understood by looking at the whole rather than at distinct pieces. Today, educational leaders must understand that in complex systems an action may have very different effects locally as compared to other parts of the system. Leaders who practice systems thinking also understand that obvious interventions may lead to nonobvious consequences. By using systems thinking, superintendents view reality though a lens that allows them to see cause and effect in a different light. They no longer see things in simple, linear, cause-and-effect ways. Rather, they begin to see reality as various reinforcing and feedback loops (Senge, 1990)

Leaders such as Dr. Hinojosa understand that to create organizational change, the leader must look at the systems that are in place and modify them in ways that will reach the goal. Superintendent preparation programs must include in their curriculum opportunities for aspiring superintendents to learn to view reality in terms of systems. The inclusion of systems thinking into the curriculum will provide future superintendents the capacity to look at the systems that are in place in their community and to determine what forces are at work. Then, the superintendent can determine what forces are keeping the system in a state of status quo. Finally, the superintendent can find a

leverage point and implement changes to that leverage point that will move the system toward the desired position.

Managing the political context. Although many may think that the work of the educators should be apolitical, the reality is that politics is central to the work of the superintendent. Today's superintendent must find ways (a) to build coalitions of strong support for schools and staff; (b) to ensure adequate and continuous funding for school facilities, educational programs, and personnel; and (c) to allocate equitably resources among instructional programs, schools, personnel, and extracurricular activities. Superintendents today cannot rely on the authority of their position to get things done; today they must be adept at politics as a result of three factors. These factors, described by Johnson (1996, p. 154) are

> 1.) public funds have shrunk while students' needs and society's expectations continue to grow, causing competing groups to draw battle lines over funding, 2.) in response to alarming reports of the schools' failings, there is an increasing conviction that public education is, indeed the province of the public rather than the professionals, and 3.) the increasingly complex ethnic, racial, linguistic, and economic diversity of U.S. communities makes it hard to reach an accord on what the schools should do and how children should be served.

Superintendent preparation programs must provide ample opportunities for their students to become adept at politics. Future superintendents need the skills that will allow them to analyze a community and to determine the political context. They should be able to determine what type of politics is the status quo. That is, in any given community, are

patronage politics the norm, or do partisan politics predominate? Is participatory politics a reality or an illusion?

Next, superintendents need skills in identifying the power brokers in the community. Dr. Hinojosa made this one of his priorities when coming into Hays CISD. His first strategy to identify what he called the players in the community was to enter into discussions with staff that understood the history of the community and to ask them to identify the main players. In addition to polling his staff, he carefully observed patterns of influence. These types of strategies need to be made explicit to future superintendents.

Finally, superintendent preparation programs would do well to integrate knowledge and skills regarding negotiation into their curriculum. Doing so will help aspiring superintendents understand how to bargain for agreement, how to build coalitions, and how to manage interest groups. These skills are integral to leaders, especially those that lead institutions central to a community, like schools.

Superintendent Selection

This study also offers several implications for those involved in selecting superintendents to lead school districts. The implications will be discussed in terms of selecting superintendents for the changing demographics in the region and in terms of selecting superintendents based upon leadership skills, as opposed to management skills.

Changing demographics. The demographics of Texas are changing: The percentage of Hispanics and other minorities is increasing, whereas the percentage of the population that is considered White is decreasing. For example, over the last 3 years the percentage of the total student population that was identified as Hispanic increased each year from 40% to 40.5% to 41.7% (TEA, 1999, 2000, 2001). Concurrently, the percentage of the total student population identified as White decreased during the same period from 42% to 41% to 40% (TEA, 1999, 2000, 2001). Considering these data, it seems likely that many districts that have served a primarily White population will soon be serving a student population that is more ethnically diverse. This diversity brings with it challenges that district staff and leaders may be ill prepared to meet. Additionally, the increasing diversity may afford more opportunities for Hispanic superintendents to serve in districts other than majority-minority districts. If so, these superintendents will need to possess the skills and knowledge to work in a community that is not reflective of their ethnicity. The subject of this case study, Dr. Hinojosa, provides a clear illustration of skills and knowledge that a superintendent needs to be successful in an environment that is not reflective of his ethnicity. School boards and consultants hired to perform superintendent searches must consider whether or not the superintendency candidates demonstrate the potential to connect with stakeholders that are not of their own ethnicity.

Leadership skills over managerial skills. Over the past decade, public schools in Texas have been rated using the AEIS. With the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act, the accountability for student success has increased. In this era of accountability, the need for leaders who are effective at improving the academic performance of all students is increasing. Presently, demographics in Texas are changing such that there is an increase in ethnic, linguistic, and economic diversity. The increased accountability and the changing demographics may be too much for the current school system, which is best suited to serve White, middle-class students. Thus, superintendent search firms and boards of trustees of school districts may need to consider selecting superintendents that have demonstrated leadership that will transform beliefs and practices. These leaders are not managers of a system; they are change agents. These new superintendents must be able to transform status quo organizations into organizations that are responsive to the needs of all constituents, not just a few select groups. This study illustrates the value of leadership that results in performance beyond what has traditionally occurred and should inform future decisions on what type of superintendent a school district should employ.

The implications described in this section centered on superintendent preparation and superintendent selection. Both of these processes are important to the future of students across Texas and should not be taken lightly. Though this study has generated these implications, there is ample

room for further research into the role superintendents play in improving the academic performance of all students. The next section will present recommendations for further study.

Recommendations for Further Research

Are the Themes Generalizable?

The findings from this single case study are limited in generalizability due to the nature of single case study methodology. However, this presents opportunities to expand the research to increase the generalizability. For example, it may be possible to identify superintendents that are believed to have transformed their districts by surveying central office staff, principals, and school board members. A study could be designed to compare how well these identified leaders reflected the four themes of this study, as compared to leaders who were not identified as transformational.

Are the Changes Institutionalized?

The data from this study suggest that a change occurred in the beliefs and practices of educational leaders in Hays CISD. These changes were related mostly to improving equity and excellence for the students of Hays CISD. In addition, the superintendent gave campuses a great deal of autonomy to determine how to meet district goals. This autonomy, coupled

with the emphasis on site-based management, resulted in innovative solutions to problems. In sum, during Dr. Hinojosa's tenure, practices and beliefs became grounded in the ideals of equity and excellence, and systems were developed to create accountability, build capacity, and provide for innovation.

However, some of the interview data alluded to respondents' concerns that all of these gains would be lost when Dr. Hinojosa left the district. One respondent asserted that he did not want to take any risks or start any new programs until he knew what the new superintendent would be like. This leads to an area for further study. It may be of interest to ascertain whether the changes in beliefs, practices, and systems made by transformational leaders can become institutionalized to the point that they are part of the organizational culture to the extent that they are not easily changed. Researchers may identify districts with recently departed leaders who display characteristics consistent with theories of transformational leadership. Then, the beliefs, practices, and systems in place at the time of the transformational leader's departure could be compared with those several years after departure.

Transformational Versus Nontransformational Leaders

Throughout the state of Texas, numerous districts have shown academic improvement equal to or greater than that seen in Hays CISD. It is

unlikely that all of these districts have leaders who exhibit the transformational traits described in chapters 4 and 5. Further research into the similarities and differences in the beliefs, practices, and systems found in effective districts with transformational leaders as compared to effective districts that have leaders that are not considered transformational may yield further insights into how to effect districtwide improvement in student achievement.

Did the Context Influence This Leader's Behavior?

After serving in Hays CISD for 5 years, Dr. Hinojosa has moved on to become the superintendent of another school district. This move provides an opportunity to conduct research into the effect of district context on a superintendent's leadership. The data from this study suggest that environmental factors influenced Dr. Hinojosa's leadership efforts. These environmental factors are not present in the new school district that Dr. Hinojosa leads.

Leadership Styles of Minority and Nonminority Superintendents

The case for this study, Dr. Hinojosa, was chosen based on a number of factors; one was his Hispanic ethnicity. Attempts to discern the effect of ethnicity on his leadership yielded several statements discussing how he used his ethnicity to promote his ideals. Specifically, Dr. Hinojosa was able to communicate effectively in Spanish and in English. This allowed him to

connect with Spanish-speaking parents in a way that a monolingual English speaker could not. Also, Dr. Hinojosa was able to serve as a model to his staff and the community of what Hispanic, low income, migrants might achieve. Although these data are important, they do not begin to illuminate any particular leadership tendencies that might result from his ethnicity. Researchers have studied differences in leadership styles of women and men; future studies could discern any differences in the way White and minority males, specifically Hispanic males, lead.

Conclusion

Today, school districts in Texas face many challenges. Dwindling state funding, increasing diversity, and increasing accountability for meeting high state standards are but a few. These challenges are being met by some districts that are successful even in light of these daunting circumstances. This research was conducted in one such successful district. It was found that Dr. Hinojosa, the superintendent of this district, played a major role in meeting the challenge of increasing academic achievement for all student groups.

In short, Dr. Hinojosa was able to bring about a substantial change in Hays CISD by taking a leadership approach that can be described as transformational. Transformational leaders are often described as those who bring about a change in the beliefs of their followers to a degree that the followers feel that it is their moral responsibility to behave in a certain manner

and to achieve certain results. In this instance, Dr. Hinojosa was able to get his staff and many members of the community to believe that all children should be successful in school and that it was the responsibility of all members of the Hays CISD to ensure that they were successful.

Dr. Hinojosa played a substantial role in the changes that occurred in Hays CISD. The findings of this study describe his role as (a) creating a shared vision, (b) developing systems of management and control, and (c) building capacity. In addition, the findings of this study suggest that Dr. Hinojosa's charismatic personality influenced his ability to achieve each of the above. The end result of Dr. Hinojosa's efforts was that Hays CISD achieved a Recognized rating under the TEA's rating system. Furthermore, the district became one in which community, district administration, and the district governance team all worked together to further the interests of school age children.

As situations continue to change in Texas, it is clear that there is a need for leadership who can achieve results in spite of traditional organizational bias toward students of color and in light of dwindling resources. When educators come to believe in all children, exercise instructional practices that meet the needs of diverse learners, and are held accountable for student performance results, the results can be astonishing. Dr. Hinojosa was able to create an environment in which all of this happened.

Appendix A

To Résumé for Central Office Administrators

To Résumé

(One Page Max with Attachments)
Name
Date

I. How have you implemented one idea from "Gung Ho" or any other activity as a result of the retreat last summer? (Doug Mc., Pam E., and James H. omit this question)

Describe what you have done to implement any new learning.

II. In the near future, major difficult budget decisions will be made. What are the untouchables from your perspective?

List the major non-negotiable items that must not be negatively affected in the budget reduction process.

III. What relationships have you built/worked on the in the past several months?

List three people (by name) who can attest to your work. Also list the reason why you chose to further develop a relationship with these individuals. One of these must be external.

IV. Which principal administrator do you interact with the most and why?

Name the individual, school, and the reason you interface with this individual the most.

V. What major impact will the bond program have on your division/department?

Please analyze the bond program and determine the short-term and long-term effects the bond will have on your world.

Appendix B

To Résumé for Campus Principals

To Résumé

(One Page Max with Attachments)
Name
Date

I. How have you "sharpened your saw" in the last six months?

Describe what new things you have learned and how it has benefited you in your leadership position.

II. What were the three biggest accomplishments on your campus?

List the three major accomplishments in the last year.

III. What relationships have you built/worked on the in the past several months?

List four people (different from last time) who could describe you as adding value to Hays CISD. Two of these must be external.

IV. What do the teacher climate survey results tell you?

Describe the high points in the survey and the areas of needed attention.

V. What are your reflections on the results of the TAKS test on your campus?

Describe the major discoveries and implications of the results.

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Vita

Rene Garganta was born in El Paso, Texas, on August 27, 1968. After earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in Biology from the University of Texas at Austin in 1996, he continued to work as an administrator in a company that specialized in providing job skills and job readiness training to out-of-work adults. One year after earning his Bachelor of Arts, he entered the Alternative Certificate Program at Region XX Education Service Center, from which he earned a Teacher Certificate in Composite Science. He taught seventh- and eighth-grade science and coached at A.J. Briesemeister Middle School in Seguin ISD from 1997 to 1999. In 1998, he enrolled at Southwest Texas State University and began working on a Master in Education degree with an emphasis in Educational Administration. In 1999, he began his public school administrative career as an Assistant Principal at Seguin High School. Mr. Garganta earned a Master in Education degree in 2000. In the summer of 2000, Mr. Garganta was selected for Cycle II of the Executive Leadership Program at the University of Texas at Austin and began working toward a Doctorate in Philosophy with an emphasis in Educational Administration. During his doctoral studies, Mr. Garganta began employment in the Victoria ISD as the state programs coordinator, the position he currently holds.

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